

Appendix

Appendix A:

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A Comparison of Costs and Staffing Ratios for the Kentucky School for the Blind and Kentucky School for the Deaf

**Residential Schools for the Deaf and Blind:
A Comparison of Costs and Staffing Ratios for the
Kentucky School for the Blind and Kentucky School for the Deaf**

*American Institutes for Research
Special Project for the Kentucky Department of Education*

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$$[(\text{FOODSERV} * .66) + (\text{HEALTH} * .66) + \text{GOHMTRANS} + \text{TOTLINST} + \text{TOTLADMN} + \text{RESISRVC}) / \text{RESISTUD}]$$

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$$[(\text{FOODSERV} * .66) + (\text{HEALTH} * .66) + \text{GOHMTRANS} + \text{TOTLINST} + \text{TOTLADMN} + \text{RESISRVC}) / \text{RESISTUD}]$$

DAY = $[(\text{FUNDING} (\text{STATE and FEDERAL only}) - \text{RESICOST}) / \text{TOTLSTUD}]$

RESIDENTIAL = $[(\text{FUNDING} (\text{STATE and FEDERAL only}) - (\text{SUMMRPRM} + \text{OUTREACH}) - \text{DAYTRANSP} - (\text{FOODSERV} * .66) - (\text{HEALTH} * .50) - (\text{CUSTODIL} * .50) - (\text{MAINSERV} * .25) - (\text{UTILITY} * .50) - (\text{GENLADMN} * .50)) / \text{RESISTUD}]$

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The American Institutes for Research (AIR), under contract with the Kentucky Department of Education, is examining and making recommendations to guide the educational services and programs serving students who are hearing and visually impaired in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The American Institutes for Research contacted numerous educational and program experts in the fields of visual impairments and hearing impairments. Dr. Robert, J. Beadles, Jr., Ph.D., CRC, Research Director at the Alabama Institute, conducted the financial and staffing analyses presented in this report.

The data presented in this report provide a comparison of the two different longitudinal financial and staffing studies of residential schools for the deaf and residential schools for the blind collected over the period of 1996-1998. Beginning in 1995, two national studies were developed to calculate the costs of educating students who were either deaf or blind in a specialized (residential) school setting.

The studies conducted through funding from the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind Foundation (AIDB) were supported by two organizations representing schools for the deaf (Conference of Educators and Administrators for Schools for the Deaf) and schools for the blind (Council of Schools for the Blind). The study was distributed on a yearly basis to over 100 specialized schools for the deaf and blind in the United States. The data used in the comparisons were provided by the Kentucky Department of Education, specifically the Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB), located in Louisville, Kentucky and the Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD), located in Danville, Kentucky.

Note: All financial calculations and comparisons presented in this report represent actual 2001 dollars. Data reported in the comparative studies were adjusted using a cost index factor from current year expenditures to 2001 expenditures. When taking into account the comprehensiveness and scope of services provided to students who are deaf or blind, the bottom line should not be based upon per student expenditures. The focus of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (1997) addresses the need for a continuum of services/placements, of which a residential school placement is an option available to parents and students.

Highlights from the Kentucky School for the Blind

- Over 99 percent of Kentucky School for the Blind's funding sources are from state allocations.
- The federal funding resources for the Kentucky School for the Blind are significantly lower than those available to other schools for the blind.
- The Kentucky School for the Blind appears to have a higher than average expenditure for administrative costs when compared percentage-wise to other residential schools.
- The Kentucky School for the Blind appears to have a comparable student per teacher ratios.
- The Kentucky School for the Blind has significantly higher student per teacher aide ratios.
- The yearly cost per day student is significantly higher than the average day student costs at other residential schools for the blind.
- The yearly cost per residential student is significantly lower than per student cost at other residential schools for the blind.
- The short course placements of public school students and by having both the Kentucky Instructional and Diagnostic Services Center and Instructional and Materials Resource Center for the Blind located on KSB's campus are unique and are not commonly found at many other residential schools. The services provided by these programs add to the outreach and service potential of the Kentucky School for the Blind.

Highlights from the Kentucky School for the Deaf

- KSD does not receive significant funding from federal sources for IDEA Part B sources when compared to other residential schools for the deaf.
- The school has a higher than average expenditure for administrative, teacher salary, and residential service costs when compared percentage-wise to other residential schools.
- Both the day and residential enrollment figures are lower than the national average of other residential schools.
- The KSD summer enrollment programs were around 60 students, half of which (n=31) were from LEAs. These programs are typically not funded separately and often come out of a school's general operating or educational budget.
- Both the residential staffing ratios and the cost of residential services per student were slightly higher than the national average from other residential schools.
- The yearly cost per day student was lower than average other residential day student costs.
- The yearly total cost residential student was also lower than the average of other school residential student costs.

The cost factors associated with a residential placement are different than the expenditures spent on a placement in a local public school. Food and staffing costs, health care costs, recreational activities, and other school-related events add to the costs of residential placements when compared to public school costs. There is no true comparison between the educational programming differences. Given the lack of sufficient numbers of qualified personnel to serve and teach children who are deaf or blind, a residential school placement provides a viable educational and cost-effective choice for parents.

In closing, the data presented in this study is consistent with other schools for the deaf and blind in the United States. Every state's residential program varies in degree and scope of services provided to infants, students, and family members. Residential programs also vary in funding sources and the diversity of the student population served. Residential programs in the United States vary in their interaction and role in the public education of students with disabilities. The role of the residential school should be as a resource to students, parents, family members, the general public, and public and private school special educators and teachers.

Given all these variables, residential programs serve a small segment of the public school population, but this group of students needs a variety of educational options available, and residential placement is one of the options that should continue to be available. Providing adequate numbers of qualified staff in public school settings will not occur unless more federal and state funds are provided to higher education programs who are graduating individuals trained to teach and work with individuals who are deaf or blind.

INTRODUCTION

The American Institutes for Research (AIR), under contract with the Kentucky Department of Education, is examining and making recommendations to guide the educational services and programs serving students who are hearing and visually impaired in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

The American Institutes for Research contacted numerous educational and program experts in the fields of visual impairments and hearing impairments. Dr. Robert, J. Beadles, Jr., Ph.D., CRC, Research Director at the Alabama Institute, conducted the financial and staffing analyses presented in this report.

The data presented in this report provides a comparison of the two different longitudinal financial and staffing studies of residential schools for the deaf and residential schools for the blind collected over the period of 1996-1998. Beginning in 1995, two national studies were developed to calculate the costs of educating students who were either deaf or blind in a specialized (residential) school setting. The studies conducted through funding from the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind Foundation (AIDB) were supported by two organizations representing schools for the deaf (Conference of Educators and Administrators for Schools for the Deaf) and schools for the blind (Council of Schools for the Blind). The study was distributed on a yearly basis to over 100 specialized schools for the deaf and blind in the United States.

The data used in the comparisons were provided by the Kentucky Department of Education, specifically the Kentucky School for the Blind located in Louisville, Kentucky and the Kentucky School for the Deaf, located in Danville, Kentucky. Additional information regarding the scope of the programming and clarification of funding principals at each respective school was gathered via personal communication. Information was provided to the researcher by Dr. Ralph Bartley, Superintendent of the Kentucky School for the Blind; Ms. Kathy Jones, Assistant Superintendent of the Kentucky School for the Blind; and Mr. Bill Melton, Financial Officer for the Kentucky School for the Deaf.

This report provides comparable data in regards to:

Funding Sources

Total Budget Expenditures

Staffing Ratios (Teachers and Teacher's Aides)

Instructional Costs per Student

Residential Staff Ratios

Residential and Day Costs per Student

Total Cost per Student (Day and Residential)

Note: All financial calculations and comparisons presented in this report represent actual 2001 dollars. Data reported in the comparative studies were adjusted using a cost index factor from current year expenditures to 2001 expenditures.

FUNDING AND BUDGET EXPENDITURES

The issue of funding is one that is as diverse as the number of residential schools. In a study conducted by the Washington State School for the Blind (2001), funding sources were solicited from 40 states. In the study, 18 states responded to the survey. The study found that funding for most residential school programs (private and state residential schools) comes from state appropriations. The funding is received either directly to the school or through a separate state agency such as the Department of Education (KY), Department of Health and Human Services (NC), or indirectly through reimbursements or allocations from Local Education Areas (LEAs) to the residential school. Some schools (more typically in the Northeastern United States) are considered private (NY and NJ) and receive funding through the Department of Education and LEAs.

In a study conducted by Wittenstein (1993), a majority of the residential schools for the blind are not considered LEAs and are not eligible to receive federal categorical funds. This is also true with residential schools for the deaf. Most schools qualify for the federal school lunch program, and several receive some part of the IDEA Part B monies for their students. Costs associated with transportation of the student vary also. Some schools pay for all transportation costs (to and from the school to home) while others receive either financial (from the LEA) or transportation support from the student's home. The majority of funding support received from the residential schools comes from state appropriated or earmarked funds (~95-98%). Some schools receive federal funds (typically Part B monies of IDEA, reimbursement for the Federal Free Lunch Program, or as special grants) and from some private foundation sources.

Funding sources are important in the determination of costs associated with the education of students with sensory impairments. Funding for most state schools for the deaf or blind comes from several sources federal, state, and private monies. The majority of funding for most specialized schools comes from state sources. Funding for both schools for the deaf and blind ranges from \$1.1 million to \$13 million. For the majority of the state schools for the deaf or blind, over 80 percent of the funding come from state allocations.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT POPULATIONS

Since the late 1990's residential school enrollment has been fairly static at most schools. Earlier in the late 1980's and early 1990's, enrollment at residential schools significantly decreased with the aging of children who lost their vision or hearing as a result of the Rubella (German Measles) outbreak.

Wittenstein (1993) conducted a survey of 37 of the 43 residential schools for the blind in the United States. In his report, average school enrollment was 119 students. Of these students, the average enrollment consisted of 84 residential students and 35 day students. The study also reported that of those schools that participated in the study that 47% of the average student body consisted of students with multiple disabilities.

Many residential schools now serve a significant number of students with multiple disabilities (both mildly and severely multiply disabled) as well as students with secondary disabilities (attention deficit disorder, emotional and behavior problems, and learning disabilities). Many of the student populations within residential schools are either borderline or below average in terms of cognitive functioning.

A new issue facing residential schools for the deaf how to teach students who have a cochlear implant? The educational philosophy of many schools for the deaf is one of the child's primary communication methods, American Sign Language. There is a growing number of students with cochlear implants attending residential schools for the deaf and these schools must be prepared to change their instructional programming to address the specific need of this group of students.

INSTRUCTIONAL STAFFING RATIOS

Students per Teacher

One of the most positive factors in the education of students with visual or hearing impairments in specialized school settings is the low student to teacher ratios. Instructional staffing ratios for teachers and teacher aides are typically lower than the national average cited by National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)– 2001 Education. National public school statistics range from 15.1 students per teacher (1996) to 13.8 students per teacher (NCES, 2001).

In residential schools, lower instruction staff ratios correlates with small class size and more direct instruction. In schools for the blind, average student per teacher ratios ranged from 3.21 to 4.74. In schools for the deaf, average student per teacher ratios ranged from 4.1 to 5.1. In a study conducted by a legislative review panel in Mississippi (1999), reported staffing ratios within both their residential programs for the deaf and blind at approximately 5 students per teacher.

Student per Teacher's Aide

Staffing for teacher aides varies within the different residential schools due to the number of students with multiple disabilities enrolled. In some schools for the blind the upward to 82% of school's student body composition is comprised of students with multiple disabilities. In some schools for the deaf, approximately 40 percent of the student population are classified as multiply disabled. Understanding the student composition is vital to understanding the instructional staffing ratios for each state school. From the AIDB studies, schools for the blind, students per teacher aide ratios ranged from 7.5 to 12.9 and for schools for the deaf, 10.1 to 12.5 students per teacher aides.

RESIDENTIAL STAFFING RATIOS

Students-Residential Staff

Residential staffing is an important issue in a residential setting. Staffing ratios vary within residential school settings depending upon the number of residential days and ages of the students. Residential staffing should provide adequate numbers of individuals overseeing the students based upon their age and needs. Many schools provide additional staff from 3:00 p.m. (after the school day ends) until bedtime. These additional staff can include recreational therapists, recreational staff, tutors, and behavior specialists. The unique needs of each student are addressed and vary from school to school.

The Florida Study (1991) recommended two different staffing ratios for residential staff. One when the child was awake (First shift) and another ratio when the children are supposed to be asleep (Second shift). The ratios for students who are deaf or blind to residential staff member was:

First shift (3:00-11:00 pm) – 9 students to one staff. (9:1)

Second shift (11:00 – 7:30) – 24-40 students (depending upon age) to one staff member (24-40:1)

Recruiting and maintaining qualified residential staff is an ongoing problem for many schools. Typical salaries or hourly wages are low for residential staff. In fact, some schools have developed positions that require residential staff to have a college degree and the pay is commensurate of someone with a college degree.

DAY AND RESIDENTIAL STUDENT COSTS

Data regarding the expenditures vary for day and residential students around the United States. Many residential schools are state funded, while others are private or receive vouchers from the LEAs for students in their districts. Rosenbloom (1997) conducted a study on the AERNET listserve of residential schools for the blind (n=8). She found that per student expenditures ranged from \$32,000 per student in Washington State to \$50,000 in California.

In a 1999 study conducted by the Mississippi Legislature, the cost per residential student (deaf or blind) was estimated at \$42,500 per child. Including capital facility costs increase the figure to \$47,683. The data presented in the Mississippi PEER study (1999) found that cost per student in residential schools from the Southeastern United States ranged from \$32,061 upwards to \$96,734. The varying factors in the cost analyses are number of students enrolled and teacher salaries. The most important driving factor in costs associated with the education of a student in a residential setting is the number of students educated; the higher the enrollment the lower the per student cost.

The costs associated with residential placements vary due to the presence of secondary and more serious disabilities. Students with behavioral problems or who are multiply disabled increase the cost of residential care and services. Students who need additional assistance in personal care and health issues and/or require an assistant increase the cost of residential programs. Many residential schools have student populations ranging from 8 to 80 percent comprised of students with multiple disabilities.

Day Students

Visually Impaired

Data provided in the 1991 Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind study showed that expenditures for day students that were blind ranged from \$25,338 to \$53,920. Taking into account the instructional, support, health and food costs, the 1998 Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind Study the average expenditures for day students who were blind ranged from \$15,982 to \$20,698.

Hearing Impaired

Data provided in the 1991 Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind study showed that expenditures for day students that were deaf ranged from \$20,248 to \$36,471. Taking into account the instructional, support, health and food costs, the 1998 Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind Study the average expenditures for day students who were blind ranged from \$14,889 to \$16,926.

Residential Students

Visually Impaired

Data provided in the 1991 Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind study showed that expenditures for day students that were blind ranged from \$32,280 to \$71,785. In the 1998 Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind Study the expenditures for residential students who were blind ranged from \$50,919 to \$63,903.

Hearing Impaired

Data provided in the 1991 Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind study showed that expenditures for day students that were deaf ranged from \$25,888 to \$47,106. In present 2001 dollars, the 1998 Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind Study the expenditures for day students who were deaf ranged from \$40,021 to \$50,599.

SUMMARY BY SCHOOL

The information provided in this summary are based upon the findings of the comparative studies and observations/opinions based on the review of the documentation provided to conduct the analyses.

Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB)

FUNDING (Figures 1, 3, and 5)

Upon examination of the budget and expenditures from the Kentucky of Department of Education reports, it appears that the school does not receive adequate funding from federal sources for IDEA Part B allocations. The school does appear to have a higher than average expenditure for administrative costs when compared percentage-wise to other residential schools.

The cost index adjustment for 2001 dollars shows that the KSB receives approximately \$300,000 more in state dollars than the three-year average for other residential schools for the blind. The percentage of the administrative budget appears to be higher for the KSB when compared to other residential schools. Outreach services also appear to be higher than those compared expenditures in other residential schools. This might be explained due to the fact that the KIDS program also provides services to day and residential students on the KSB campus.

ENROLLMENT (Figure 7)

The enrollment at the Kentucky School for the Blind seems reasonable given the location of the school. Located in the Western part of the state it appears logical that the majority of the students enrolled come from the surrounding counties. The Kentucky School for the Blind is in a strategic location (Louisville, KY) and is in a city that has public transportation, which is vitally important to the transition of students from school to work or post-secondary education.

The enrollment data provided in the study does not account for the number of short-term placements in the total enrollment. Short-term placement students come in for a brief period of time, either for evaluation or to be taught specific instructional programming (Braille or Assistive Technology). The number of students varies upon LEA referral; thus the true enrollment at KSB is not clearly a measure of just residential and day students. The short-term students are provided the same housing and medical treatment as the full-time students; thus comparisons in enrollment trends and cost analyses need to take these “temporary” students into consideration.

The enrollment data provided does not take into account some of the additional programming that occurs on a residential school campus. Summer programming, both academic and recreational, are provided annually to both residential and public school students with visual impairments. These programs are typically not funded separately and often come out of a school’s general operating or educational budget.

Residential enrollment is almost identical to other residential enrollments in the three-year comparison. Day student enrollment appears to be almost half that of other residential schools. The day enrollment presented in the Figure 7 does not include short-course placements. The enrollment of short-course students varies based upon the student’s needs, thus short-term placements, although not counted in the overall enrollment can impact the student count.

INSTRUCTIONAL STAFFING AND COSTS (Figures 9 and 11)

The instructional staffing ratios at KSB for teachers appear to be consistent with the national averages. The ratio for students per teacher's aides is twice as high as that of other residential schools. If the schools population were to increase in the numbers of students with multiple disabilities then more teacher's aides would be needed.

Over the years with dwindling educational budgets and the need to address other instructional issues, technology, braille, or behavioral, many residential schools have had to reevaluate staffing and reduce the number of aides available to teachers. In essence the aides are still there, just in more specialized roles such as braillists and technology specialists. This may be the case in regards to KSB.

Instructional costs per student appear to be higher than the national average.

RESIDENTIAL STAFFING AND COSTS (Figures 13 and 15)

Residential staffing ratios appear to be higher than that of other residential programs. The numbers are within the range of residential staff reported in the Florida Study (1991). Data on the numbers of students per residential staff member by age group are important data to collect. Future reporting should include staffing ratios by age (or grade) dorm assignment.

COST PER STUDENT (Figures 17 and 19)

The instructional staffing ratios for teachers are similar to residential school programs. The staffing ratios for teacher aides appear to be high. Future consideration should be made to employ more teacher aides to help in the classrooms. Should the student population demographics shift to admitting more students with multiple disabilities, then hiring more aides will be necessary to meet the needs of this group.

Residential staffing numbers appear to be adequate for the residential population. The ratio of residential students per residential staff is within the range of other residential schools in the United States. The numbers of students per residential staff should range between six to ten students per staff member. Numbers consistent with state-mandated staffing ratios at Intermediate Care Facilities for the Mentally Retarded (ICFMRs) should be considered when examining staffing ratios.

The yearly cost per day student appears to be lower than average other day student costs.

The Kentucky School for the Blind provides several different outreach services. These include: Kentucky Instructional and Diagnostics Services (KIDS), the Instructional Resource and Material Center for the Blind, short-course programs for public school students, and the summer program activities conducted on the main school campus. These programs provide services to public school and to KSB students. Future recommendations would be to disaggregate the costs and expenses associated with the day students from the KIDS programs.

Also, costs per student meal were calculated on expenditures provided. Better financial documentation of food spending would help lower the associated food costs per student. Food expenditures were documented at \$68,000 and upon confirmation with KSB staff food costs were in excess of \$90,000.

Examination of the cost calculations for residential students appears to be within the range of expenditures calculated for other residential school students. These data were not significantly different than other residential school programs.

The short-course placements of public school students and by having both the Kentucky Instructional and Diagnostic Services Center and Instructional and Materials Resource Center for the Blind located on KSB's campus are unique and are not commonly found at many other residential schools. The services provided by these programs adds to the outreach and service potential of the Kentucky School for the Blind.

The overall mission of the Kentucky School for the Blind appears to be comprehensive in services provided to students who are visually impaired in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. When taking into account the comprehensiveness and scope of services provided to students who are visually impaired, the bottom line should not be based upon per student expenditures. The focus of the Individual's with Disabilities Act (1997) addresses the need for a continuum of services, of which a residential school placement is an option available to parents and students.

Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD)

FUNDING (Figures 2, 4, and 6)

Upon examination of the budget and expenditures from the Kentucky of Department of Education reports, it appears that KSD does not receive significant funding from federal sources for IDEA Part B sources when compared to other residential schools for the deaf. Percentage-wise the school has a higher than average expenditure for administrative, teacher salary, and residential service costs when compared percentage-wise to other residential schools.

ENROLLMENT (Figure 8)

Located in the eastern part of the state, it appears logical that the majority of the students enrolled come from the surrounding counties. The Kentucky School for the Deaf does not appear to be located near any major city. Both the day and residential enrollment figures are lower than the national average of other residential schools.

Summer programming, both academic and recreational, are provided annually to both residential and public school students with who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. The KSD summer enrollment programs were around 60 students, half of which (n=31) were from LEA's. These programs are typically not funded separately and often come out of a school's general operating or educational budget.

INSTRUCTIONAL STAFFING AND COSTS (Figures 10 and 12)

Instructional staffing for teachers was lower than the national average for other residential schools for the deaf. The numbers of students per teacher aides are twice as high at the KSD than at other residential schools. Instructional staffing costs were higher at the KSD than at other residential schools for the deaf. This could be attributed to several factors such as higher teacher salaries, teachers will longer years of service, teachers with more advanced educational degrees, or the failure to reduce staff when enrollment dropped.

RESIDENTIAL STAFFING AND COSTS (Figures 14 and 16)

The residential staffing ratios were slightly higher than other schools for the deaf. The cost of residential staff per student was significantly higher than the national average from other residential schools.

COST PER STUDENT (Figures 18 and 20)

The instructional staffing ratios for teachers were slightly lower than to residential school programs. The staffing ratios for teacher aides appear to be high. Future consideration should be made to employ more teacher aides to help in the classrooms. Should the student population demographics shift to admitting more students with other disabilities or the emerging population of cochlear implant students then hiring more aides will be necessary to meet the needs of this group.

Residential staffing numbers appear to be adequate for the residential population. The ratio of residential students per residential staff is slightly higher than that of other residential schools in the United States. The numbers of students per residential staff should range between six to ten students per staff member.

The yearly cost per day student was lower than average other residential day student costs. The yearly cost residential student was also lower than the average of other school residential student costs.

National Financial Study of Schools for the Blind and Visually Impaired (1996-1998)

Since 1996 the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind - Office of Institutional Research has been conducting research on financial costs of specialized school programs serving children with sensory impairments. The survey instrument collected financial and educational data from schools for students with sensory impairments. The instrument was broken down into 12 of financial and educational areas:

- General Institutional Profile (funding sources and infrastructure)
- Student Enrollment
- Administrative Staff
- Instructional Staff
- Instructional Support Services
- Related Student Support Services (health and student support services)
- Operations and Maintenance Services
- Transportation Services
- Auxiliary Services (food and residential)
- General Administration Services
- Summer Programs
- Outreach Services

The survey instrument collected specific funding and facility information such as:

- School funding sources (federal, state, private, and other)
- Total campus acreage
- Number of buildings
- Building square footage

The survey also collected specific instructional and residential information regarding:

- Student enrollment
- Staffing ratios (students per teacher and teacher aide)
- Residential Staffing Ratios
- Residential and Day Student Costs

The data presented in this report is a summarization and comparison of 24 schools serving students with visual impairments. Respectively by year, the number of the schools participating in the study were:

- 1996 (n=7)
- 1997 (n=17)
- 1998 (n=14)

The regional breakdown schools that participated in the study were:

- Seven schools from the Southern United States
- Five schools from the Midwestern United States
- Seven schools from the Northeastern United States
- Five schools from the Southwestern United States

National Financial Study of Schools for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (1996-1998)

Since 1996 the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind - Office of Institutional Research has been conducting research on financial costs of specialized (residential) school programs serving children with hearing impairments. The survey instrument collected financial and educational data from schools for students with hearing impairments. The instrument was broken down into 12 of financial and educational areas:

- General Institutional Profile (funding sources and infrastructure)
- Student Enrollment
- Administrative Staff
- Instructional Staff
- Instructional Support Services
- Related Student Support Services (health and student support services)
- Operations and Maintenance Services
- Transportation Services
- Auxiliary Services (food and residential)
- General Administration Services
- Summer Programs
- Outreach Services

The survey instrument collected specific funding and facility information such as:

- School funding sources (federal, state, private, and other)
- Total campus acreage
- Number of buildings
- Building square footage

The survey also collected specific instructional and residential information regarding:

- Student enrollment
- Staffing ratios (students per teacher and teacher aide)
- Residential Staffing Ratios
- Residential and Day Student Costs

The data presented in this report is a summarization and comparison of 24 schools serving students with hearing impairments. Respectively by year, the number of the schools participating in the study were:

- 1996 (n=8)
- 1997 (n=12)
- 1998 (n=6)

The regional breakdown schools that participated in the study were:

- Twelve schools from the Southern United States
- Five schools from the Midwestern United States
- Seven schools from the Northeastern United States

Figure 1. Kentucky School for the Blind
Funding Sources
State and Federal Funds

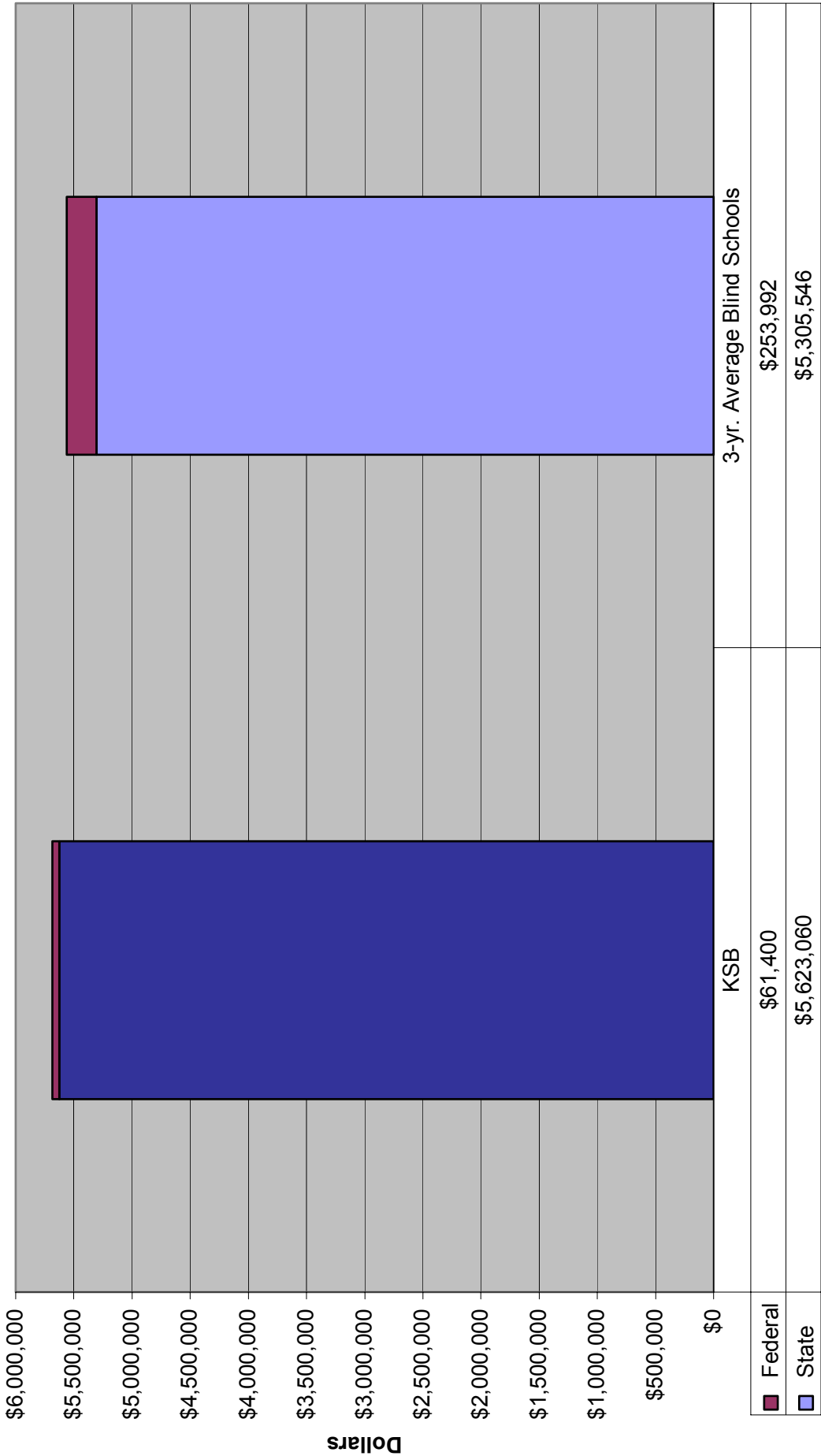
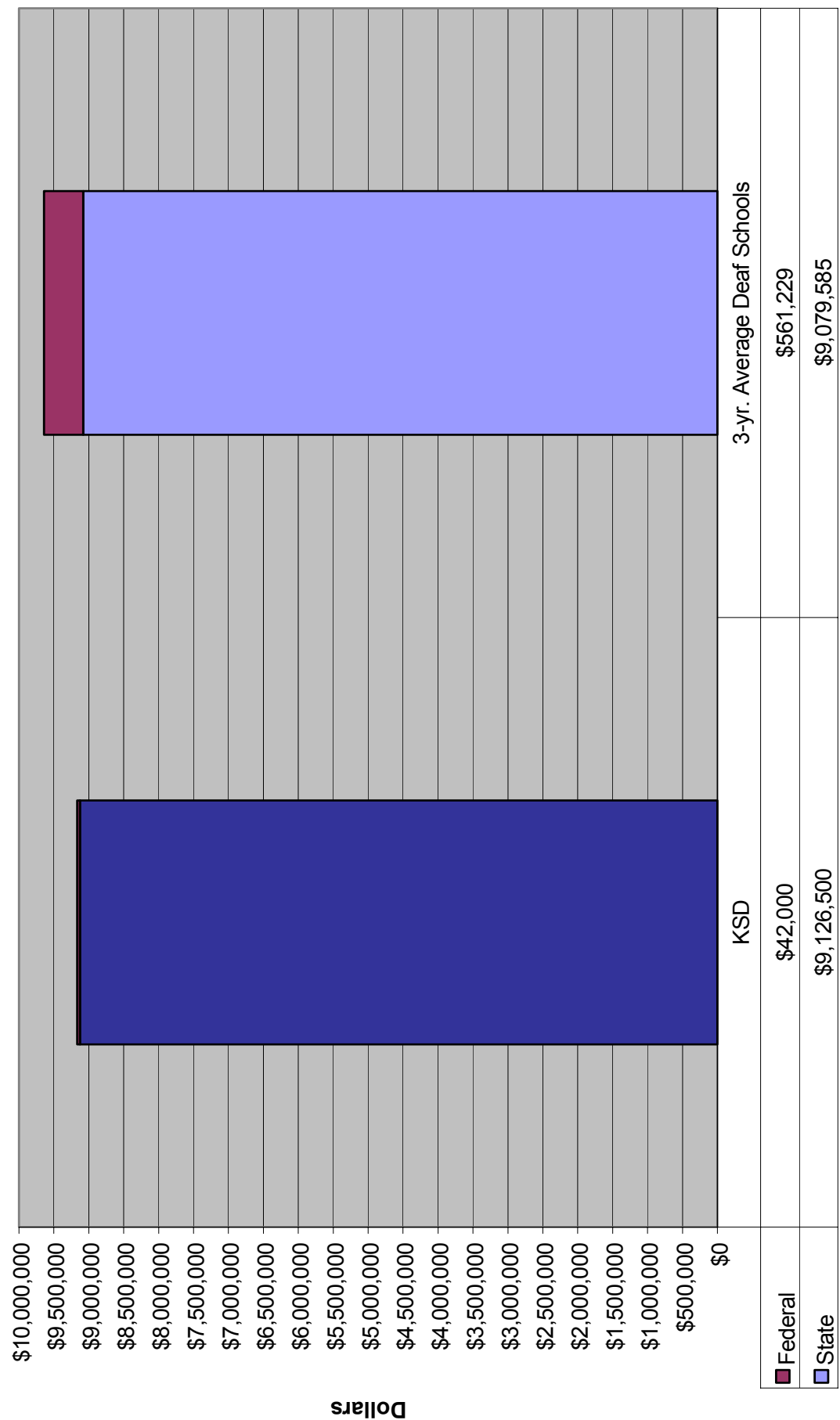
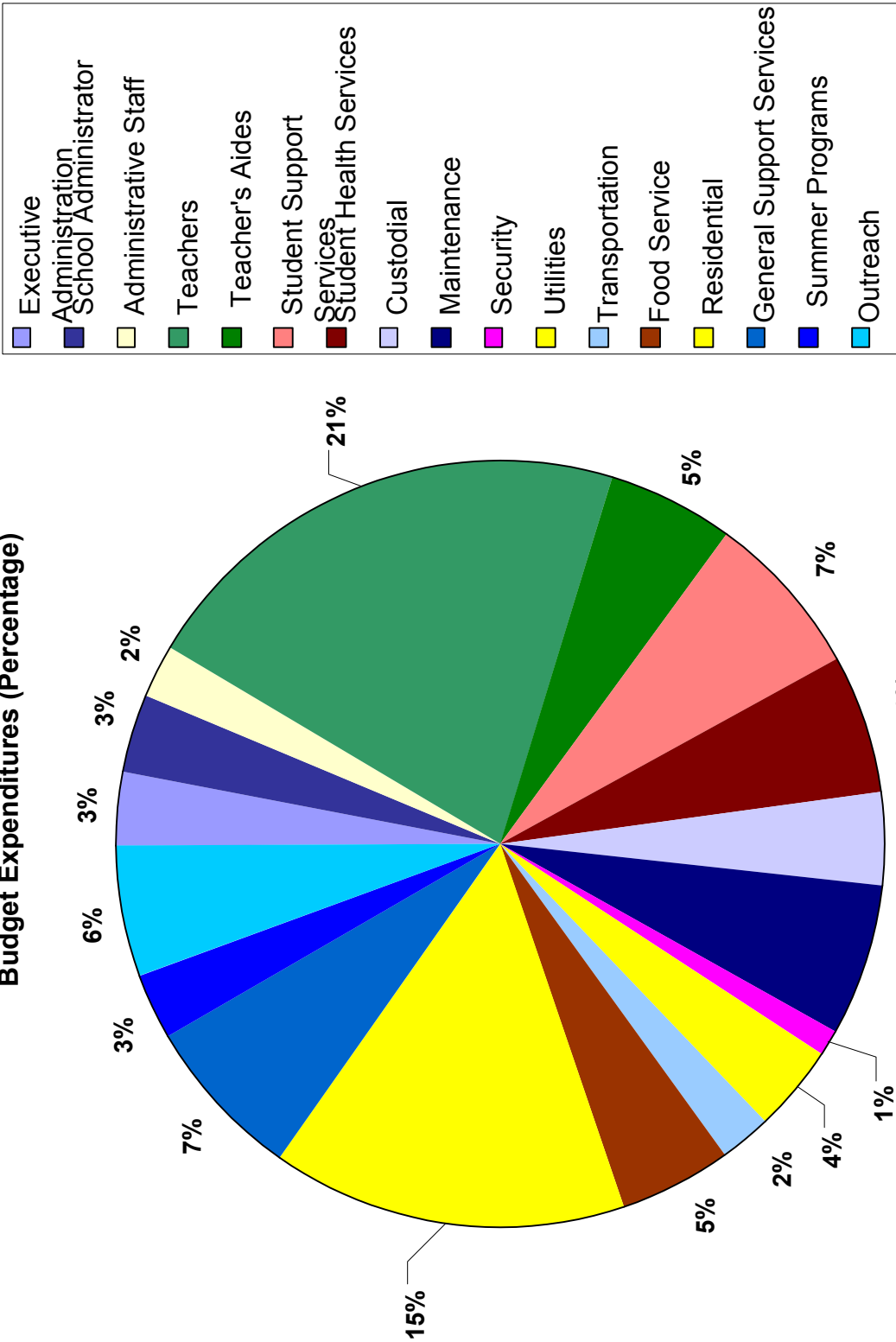


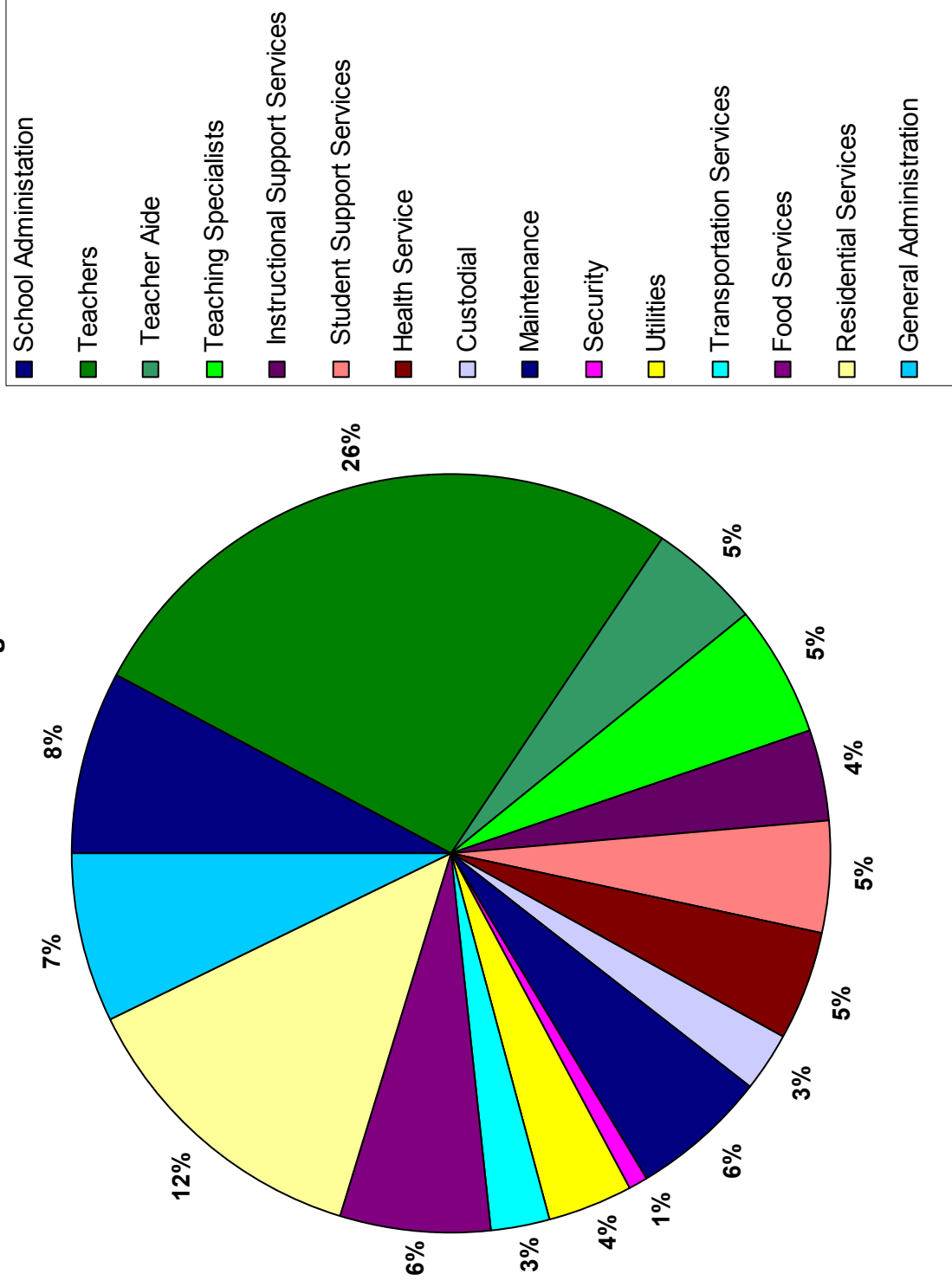
Figure 2. Kentucky School for the Deaf
Funding Sources
State and Federal Funds



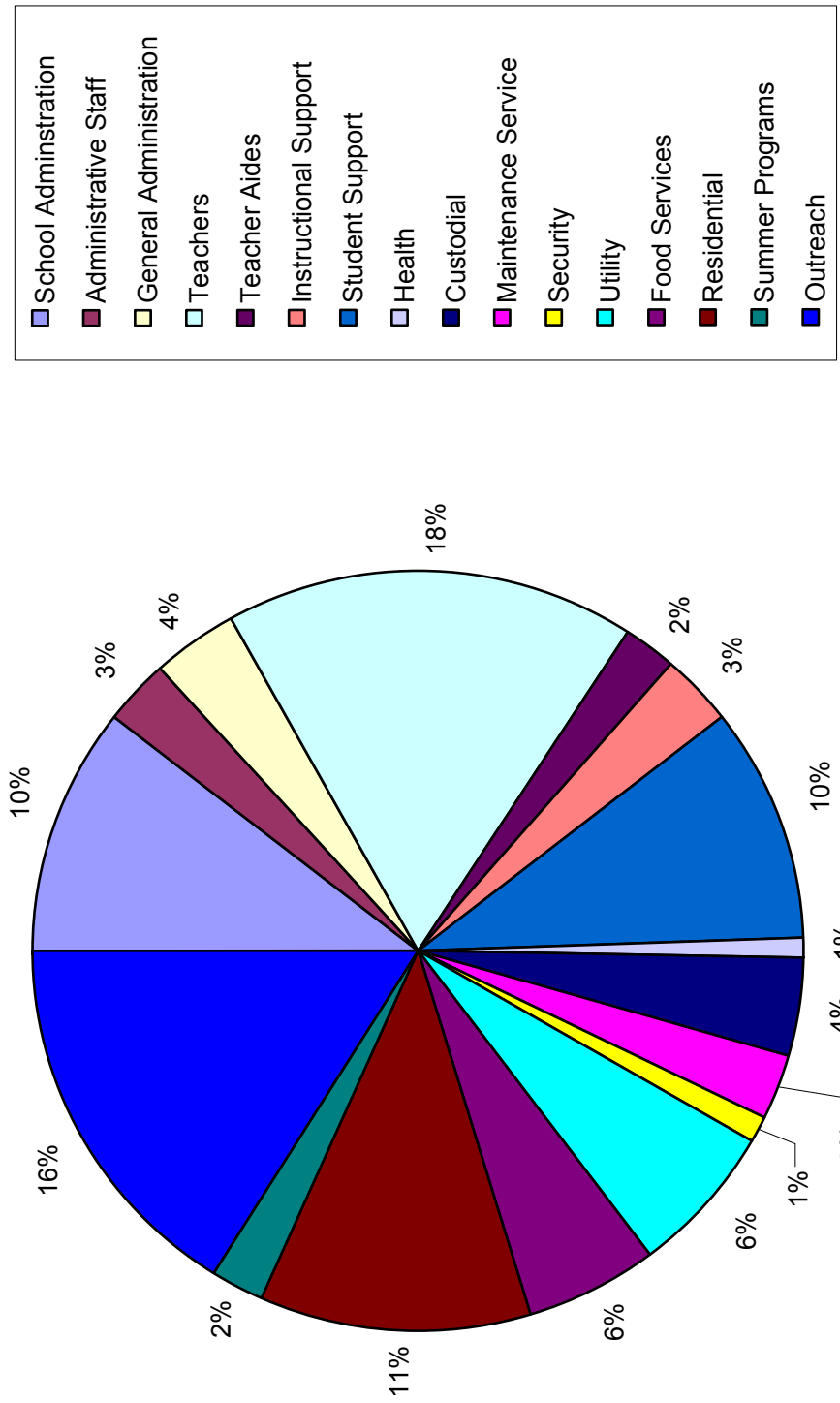
**Figure 3. Schools for the Blind
Budget Expenditures (Percentage)**



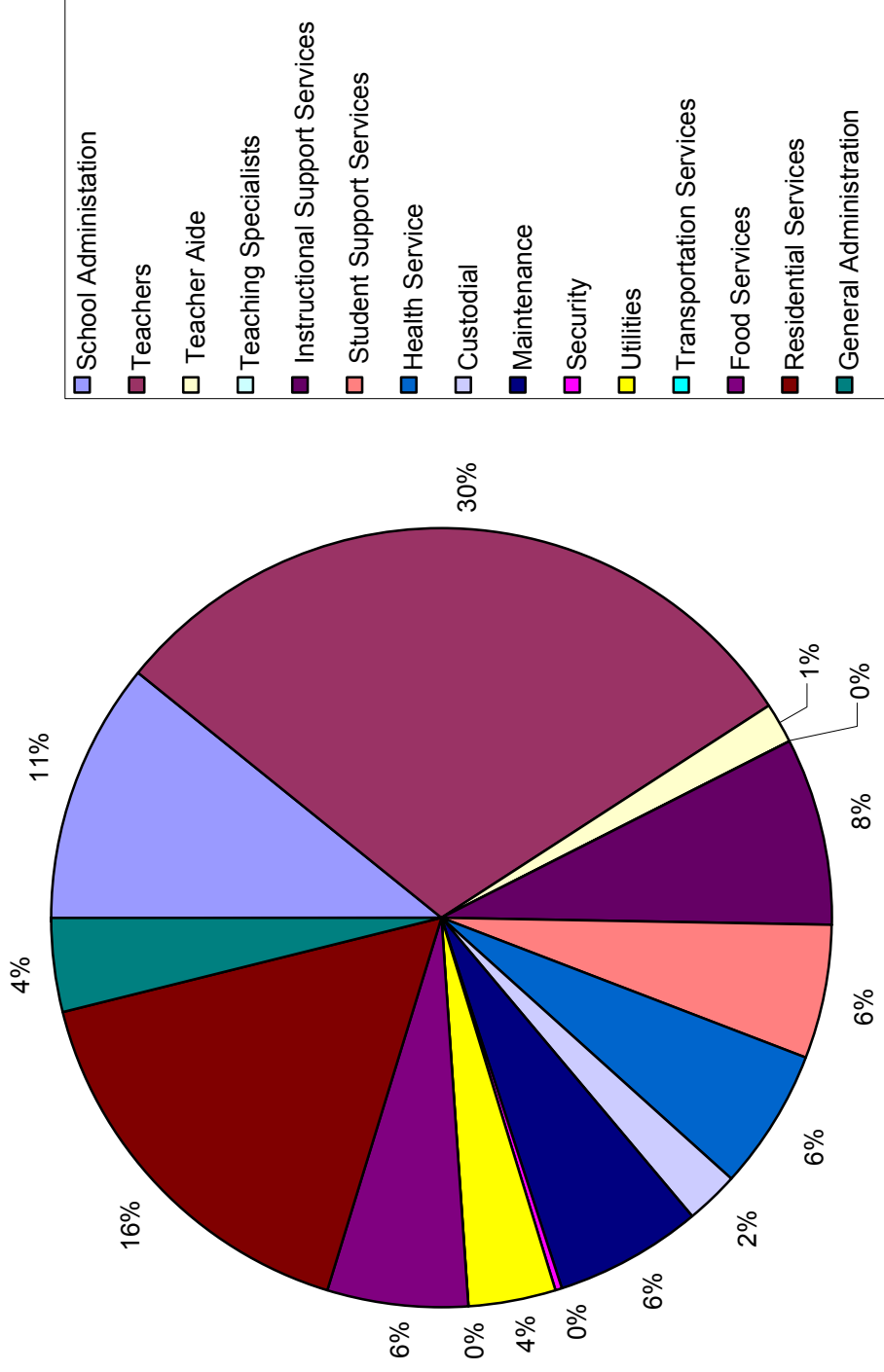
**Figure 4. Schools for the Deaf
Budget Expenditures (Percentage)
Three Year Average**



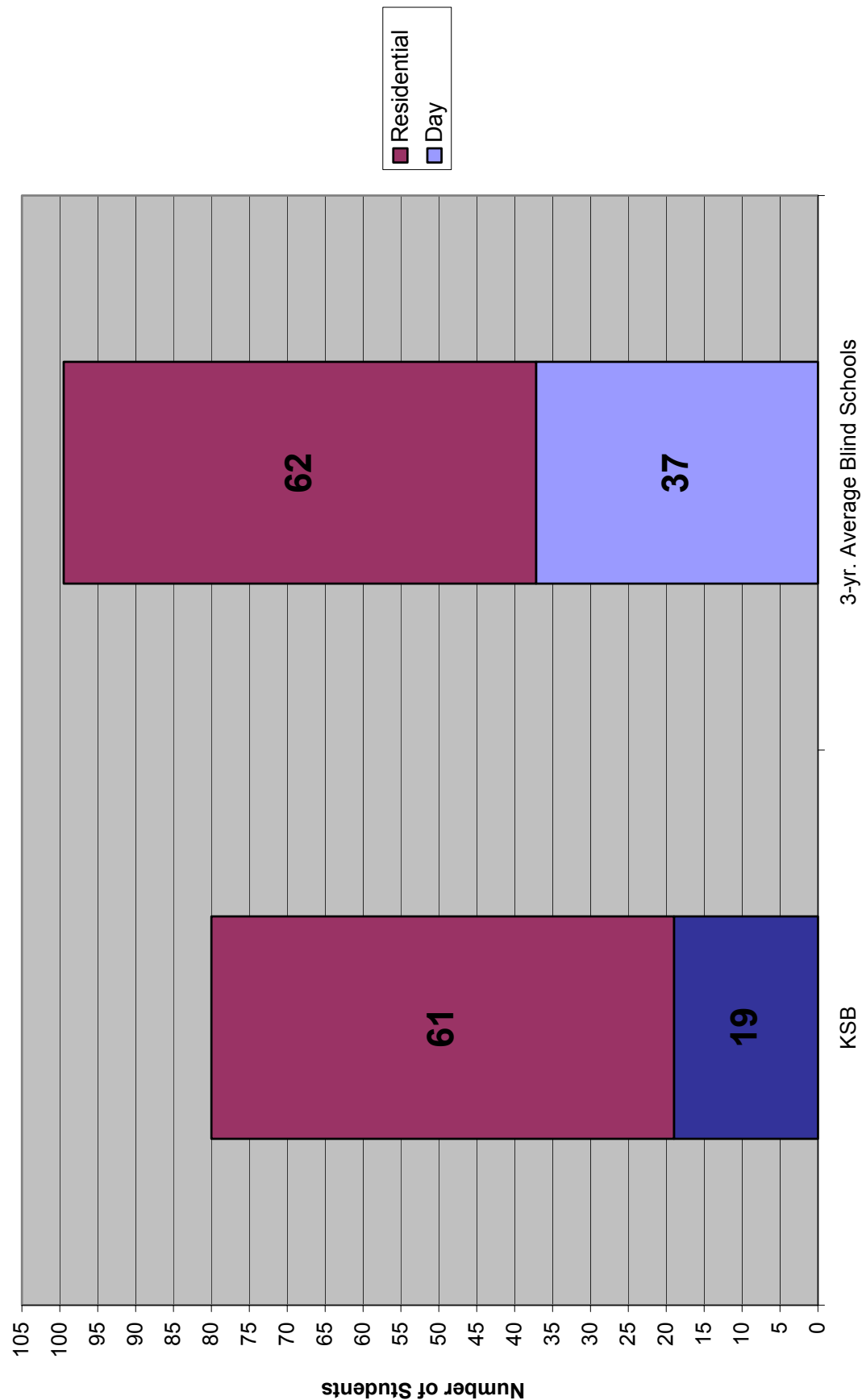
**Figure 5. Kentucky School for the Blind
School Expenditures (Percentages)**



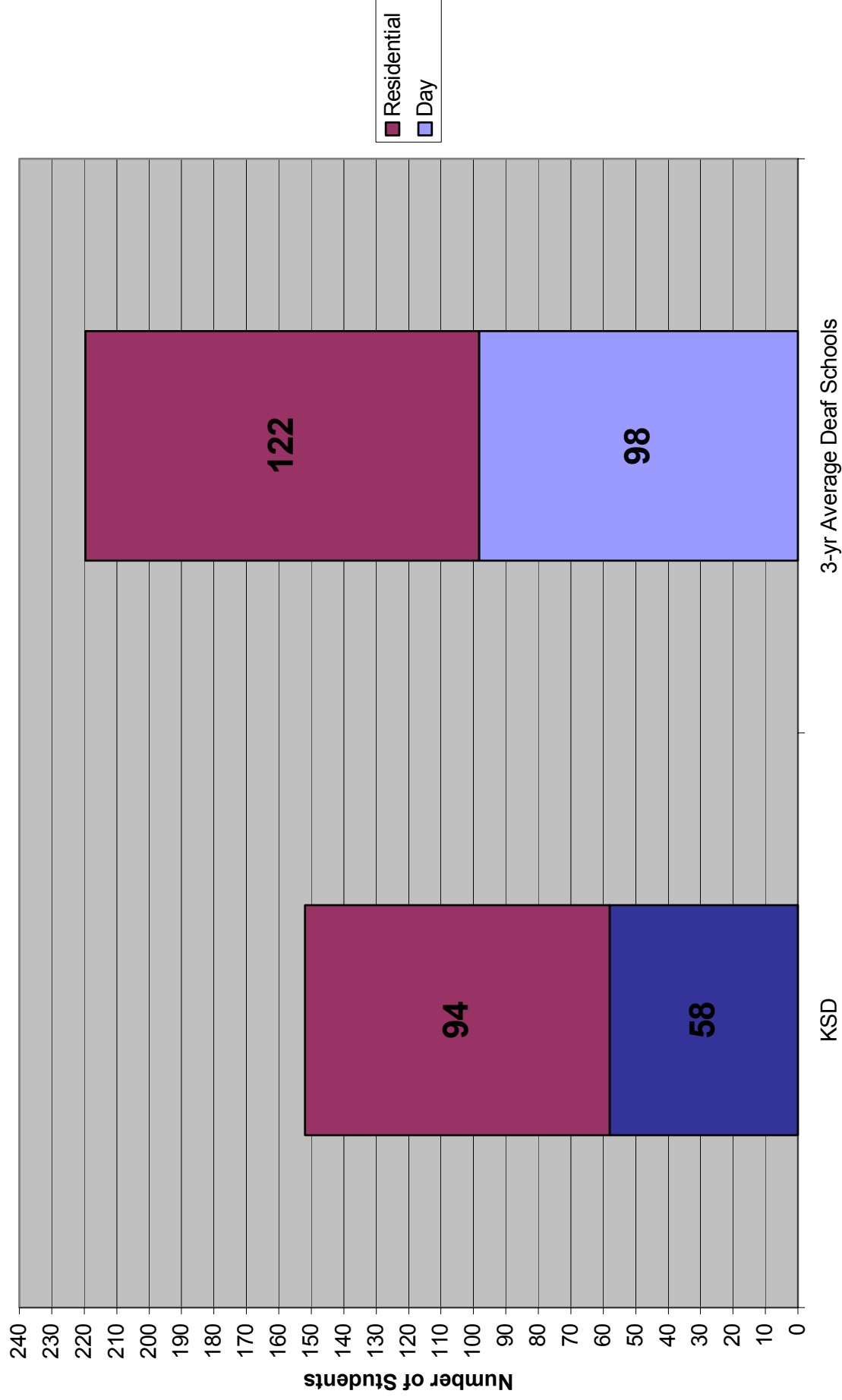
**Figure 6. Kentucky School for the Deaf
Budget Expenditures (Percentages)**



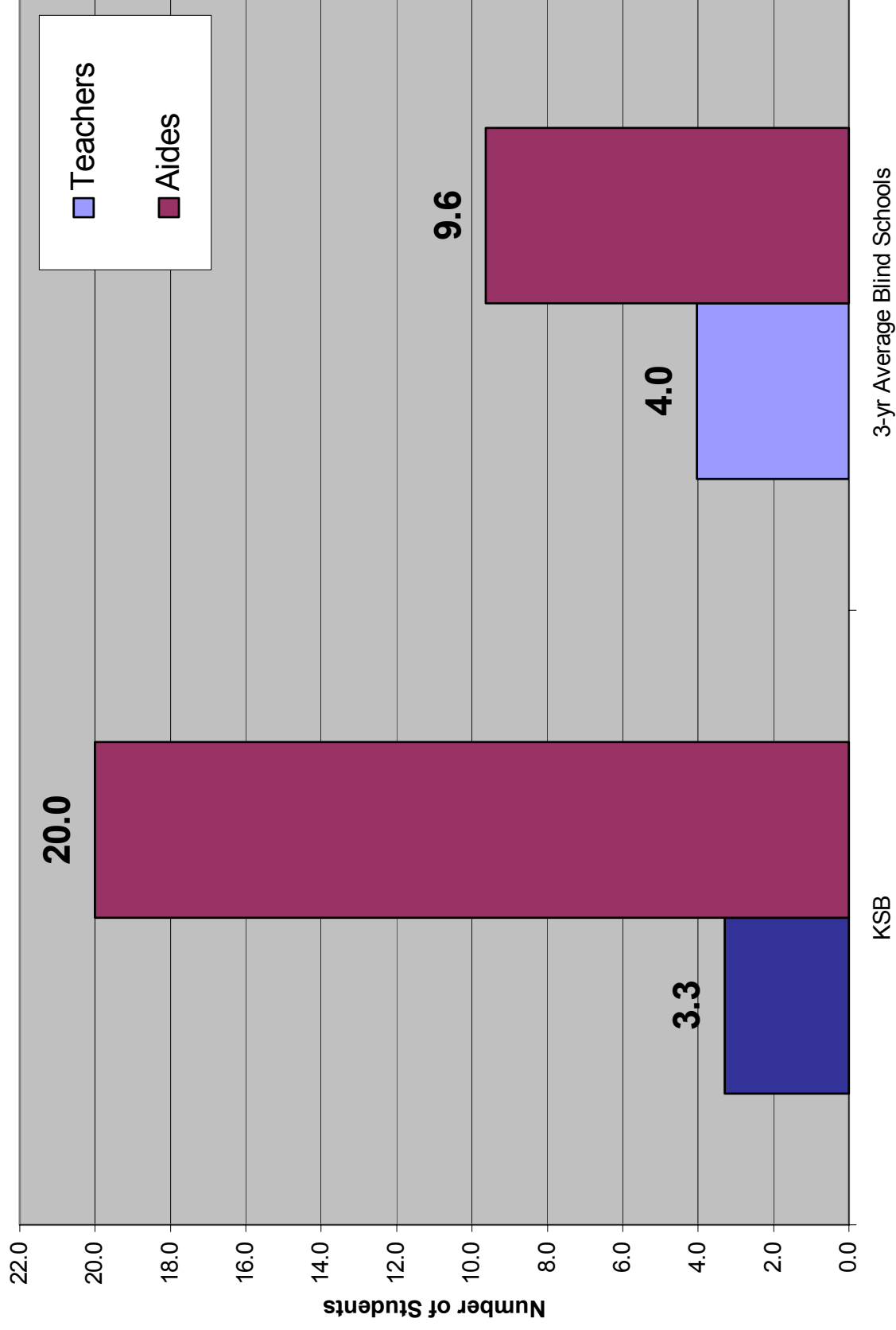
**Figure 7. Kentucky School for the Blind
Student Enrollment**



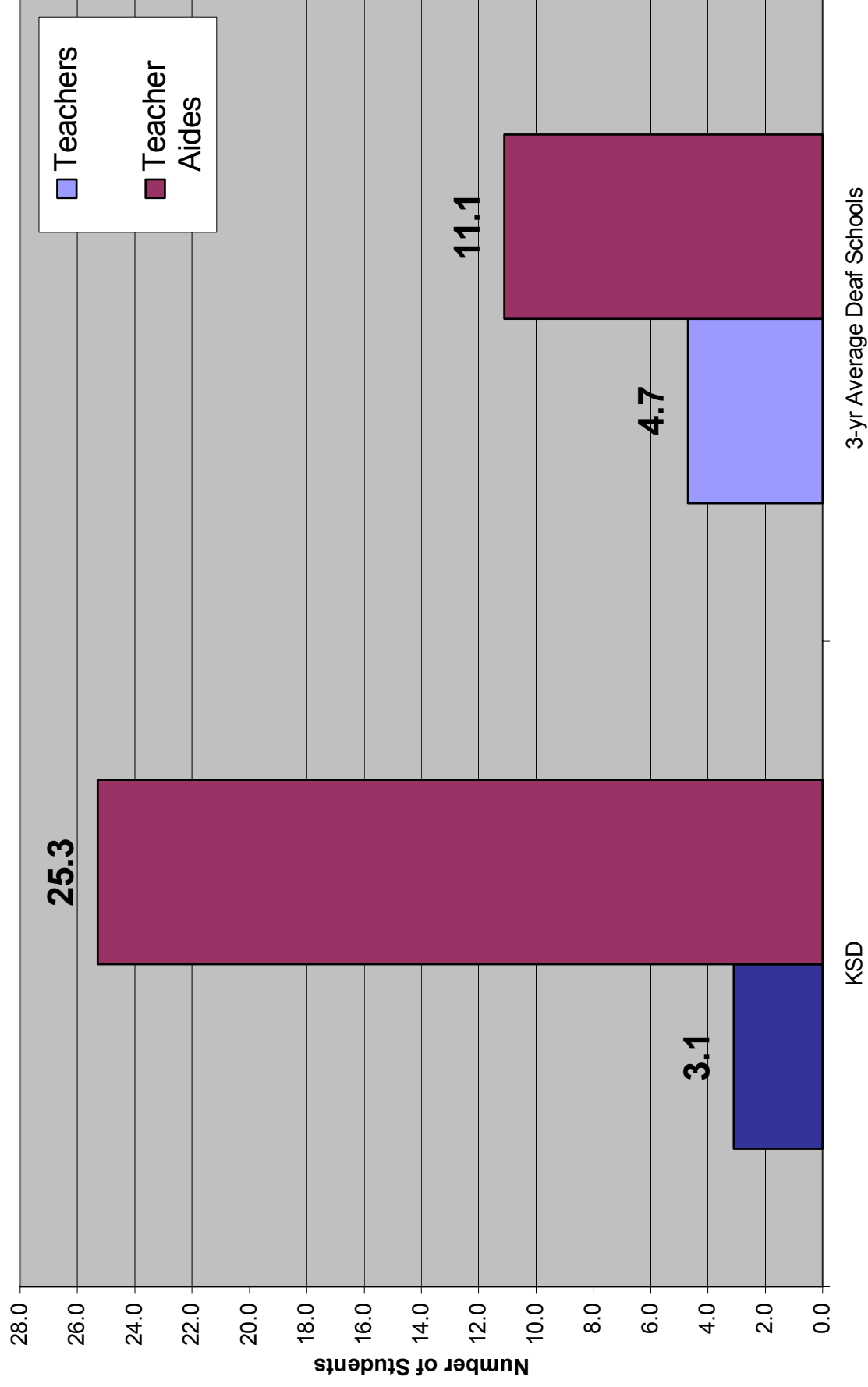
**Figure 8. Kentucky School for the Deaf
Student Enrollment**



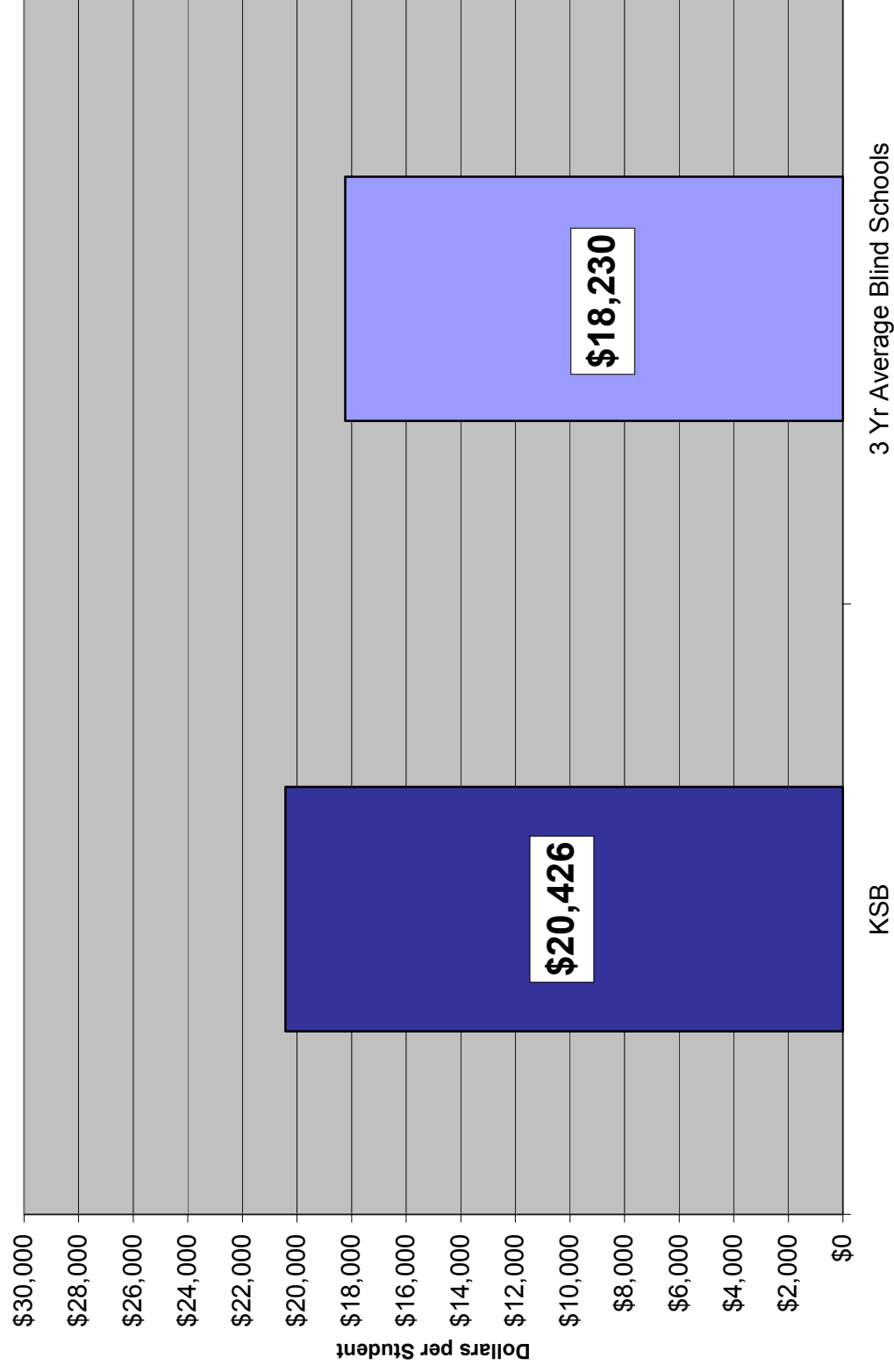
**Figure 9. Kentucky School for the Blind
Students per Teacher and Teacher Aides**



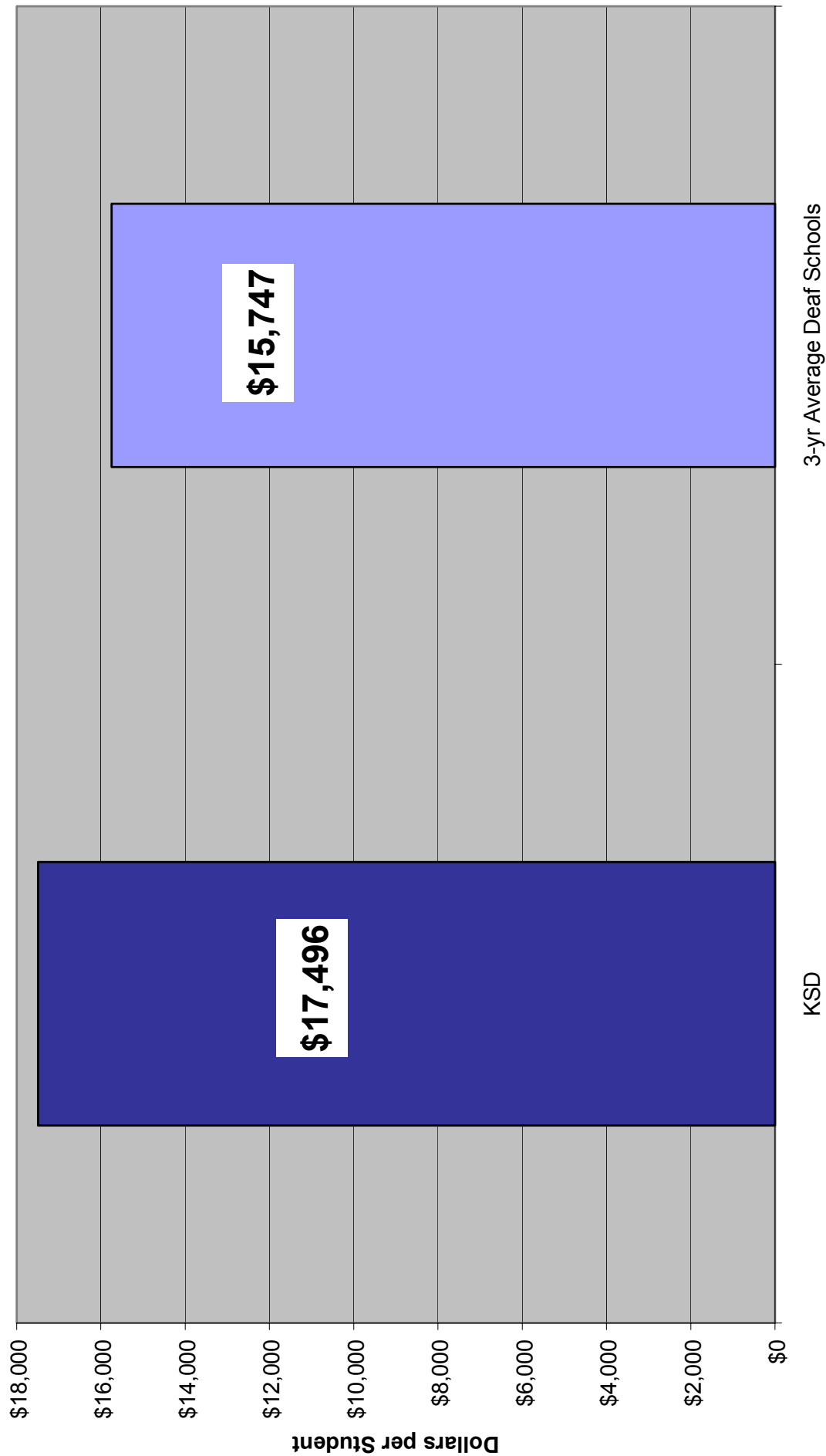
**Figure 10. Kentucky School for the Deaf
Students per Teacher and Teacher Aide**



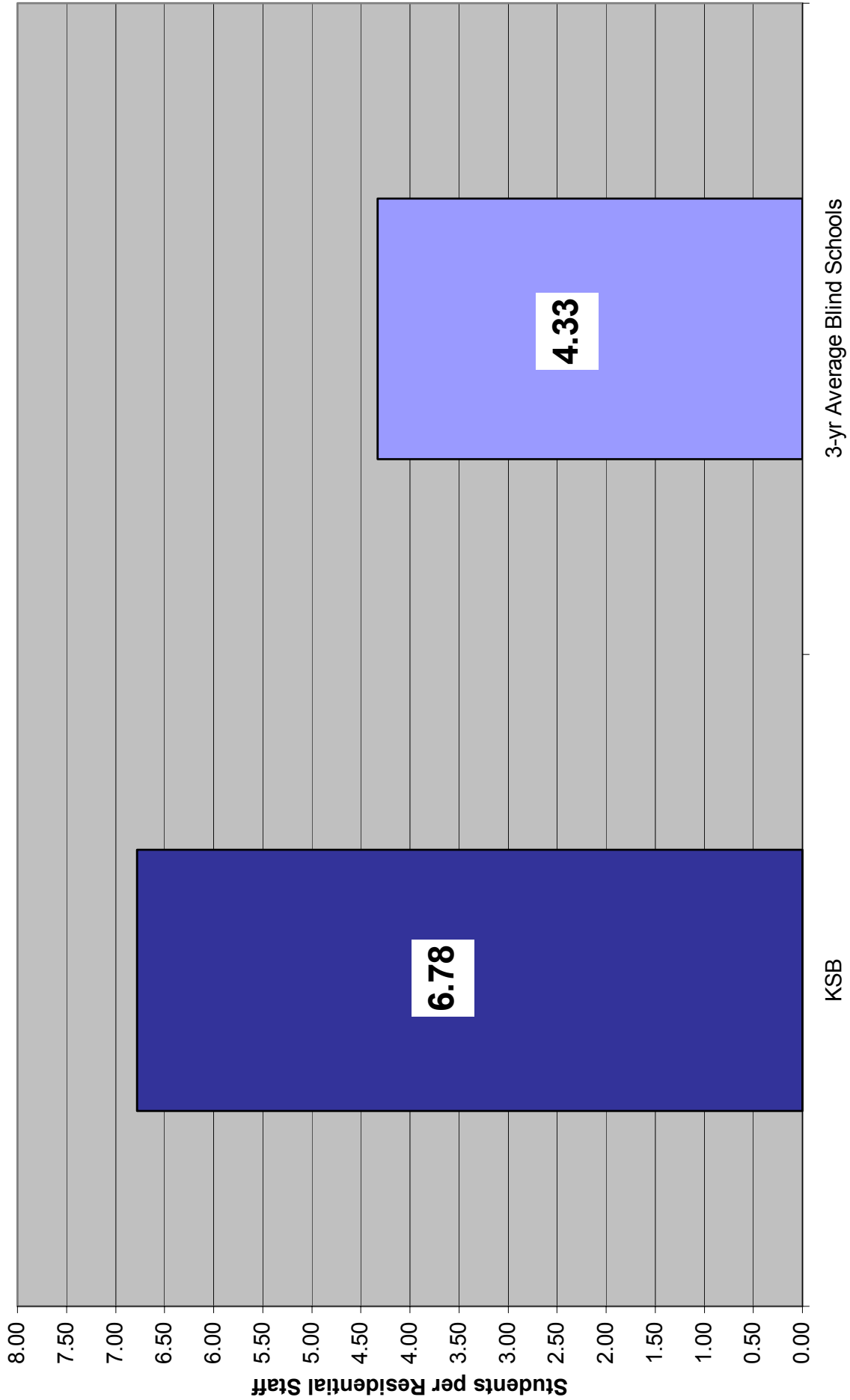
**Figure 11. Kentucky School for the Blind
Instructional Cost per Student
(Teachers, Aides, and Instructional Support Services)**



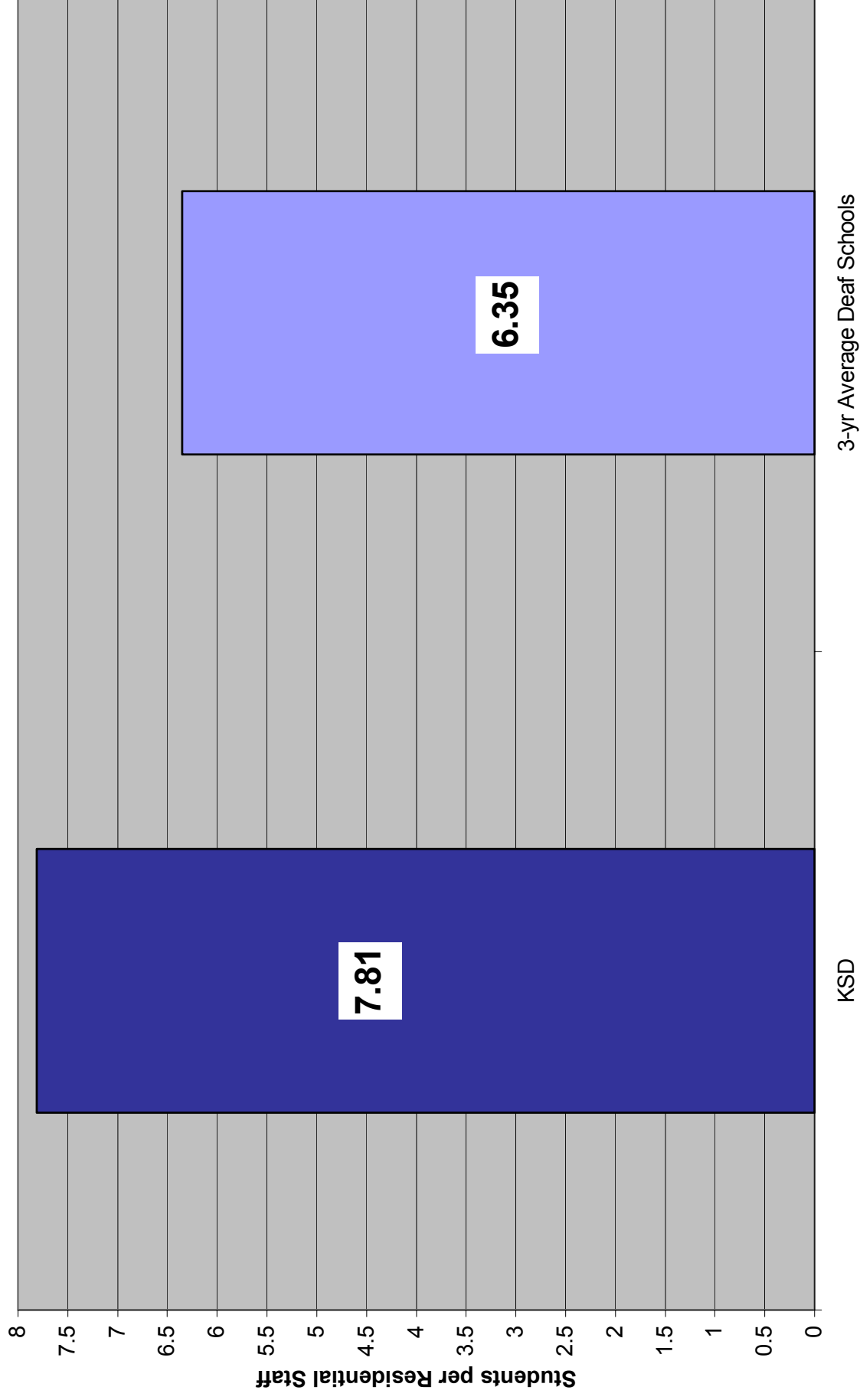
**Figure 12. Kentucky School for the Deaf
Instructional Costs per Student
(Teacher, Aide, and Instructional Support Services)**



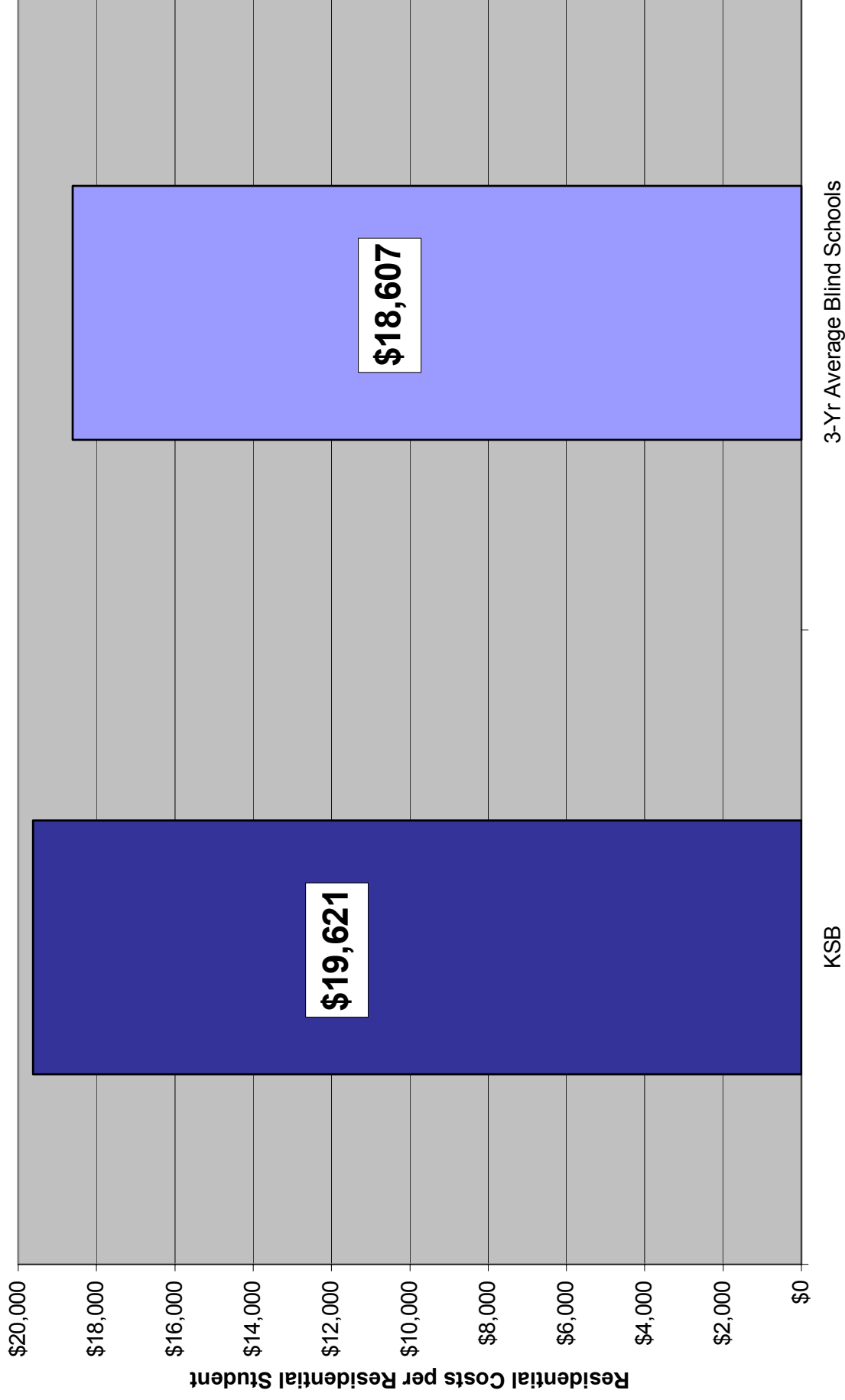
**Figure 13. Kentucky School for the Blind
Students per Residential Staff**



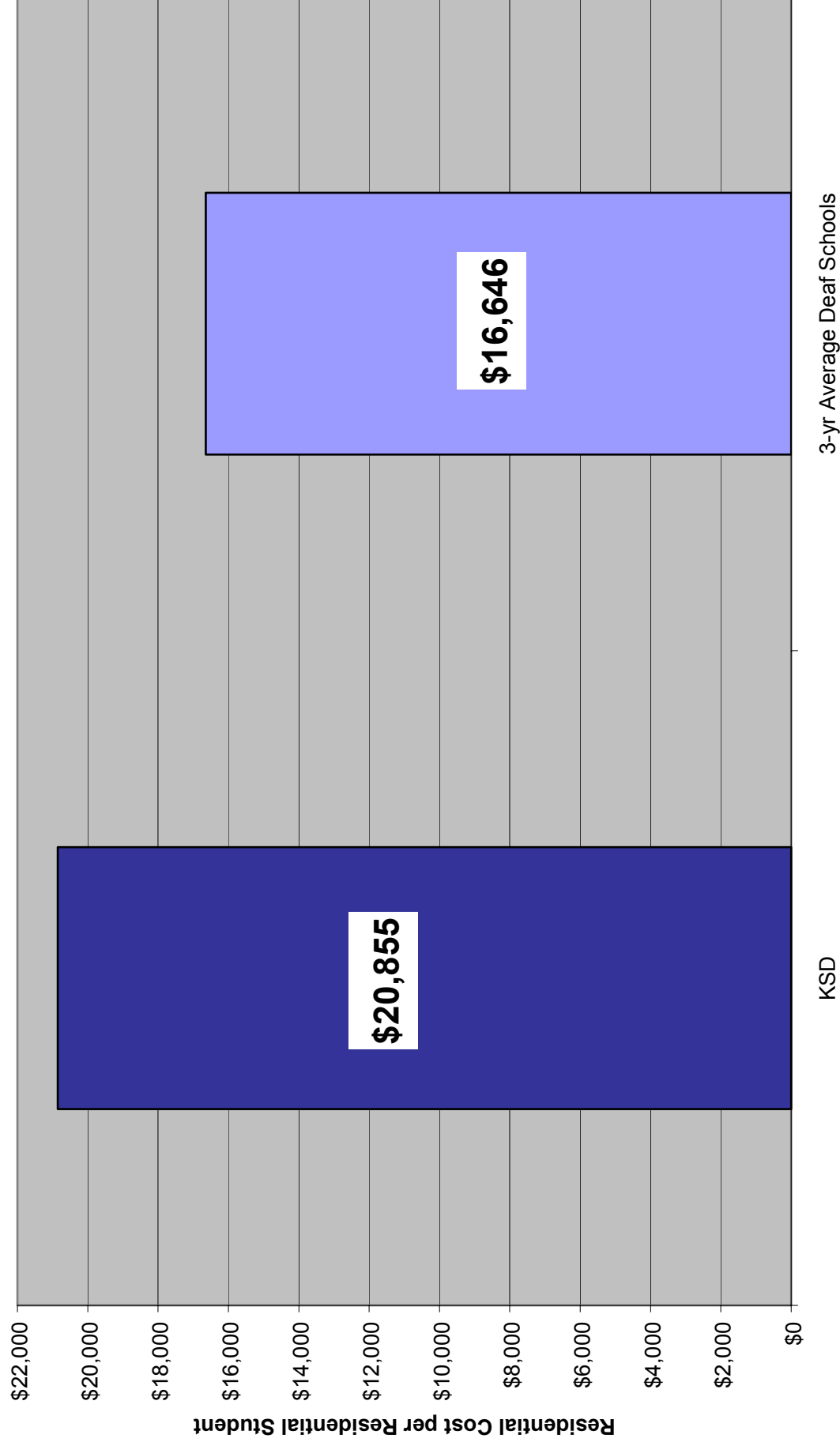
**Figure 14. Kentucky School for the Deaf
Students per Residential Staff**



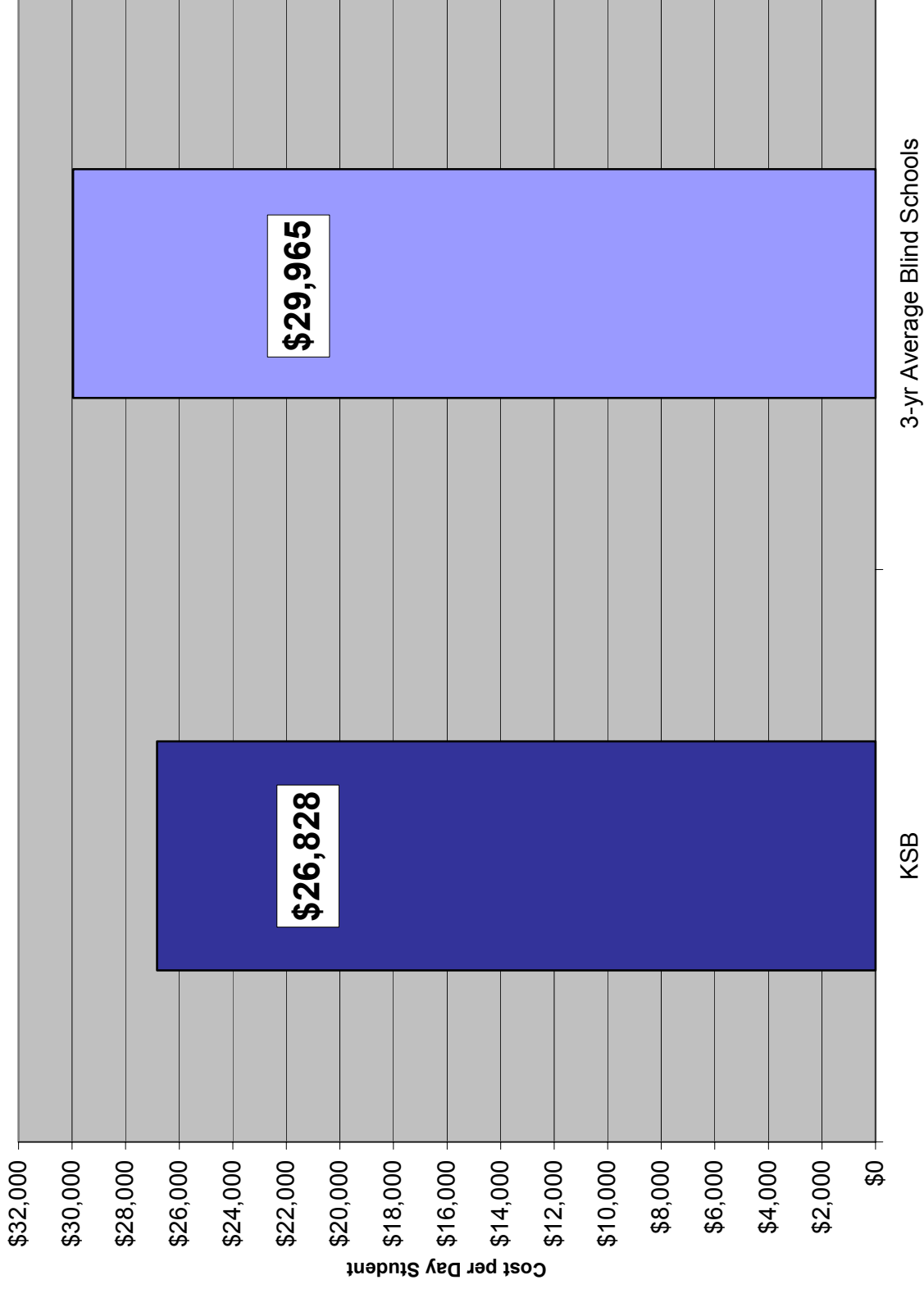
**Figure 15. Kentucky School for the Blind
Residential Costs per Student (Residential Staffing and Food)**



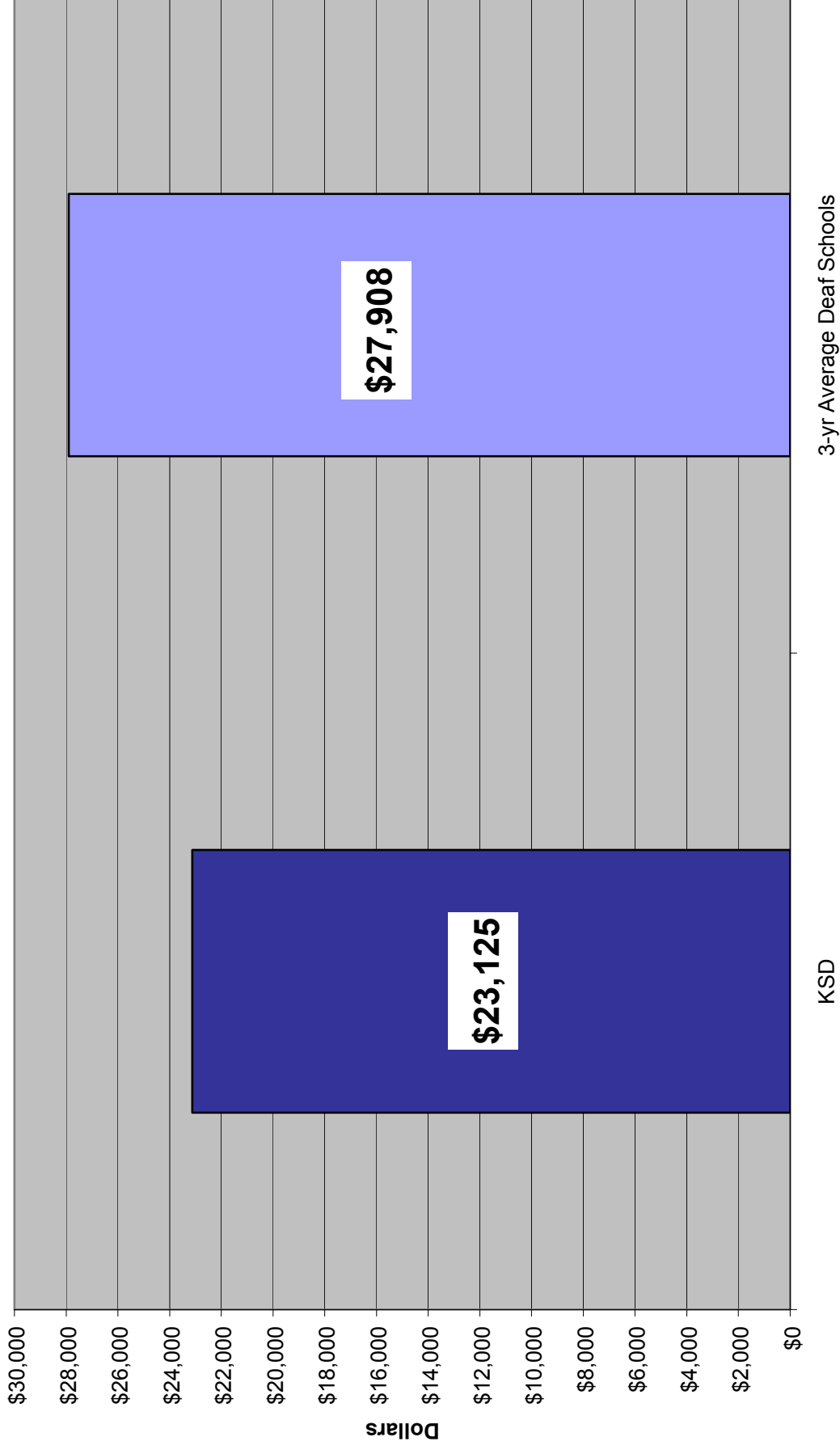
**Figure 16. Kentucky School for the Deaf
Residential Cost per Student (Residential Staffing and Food)**



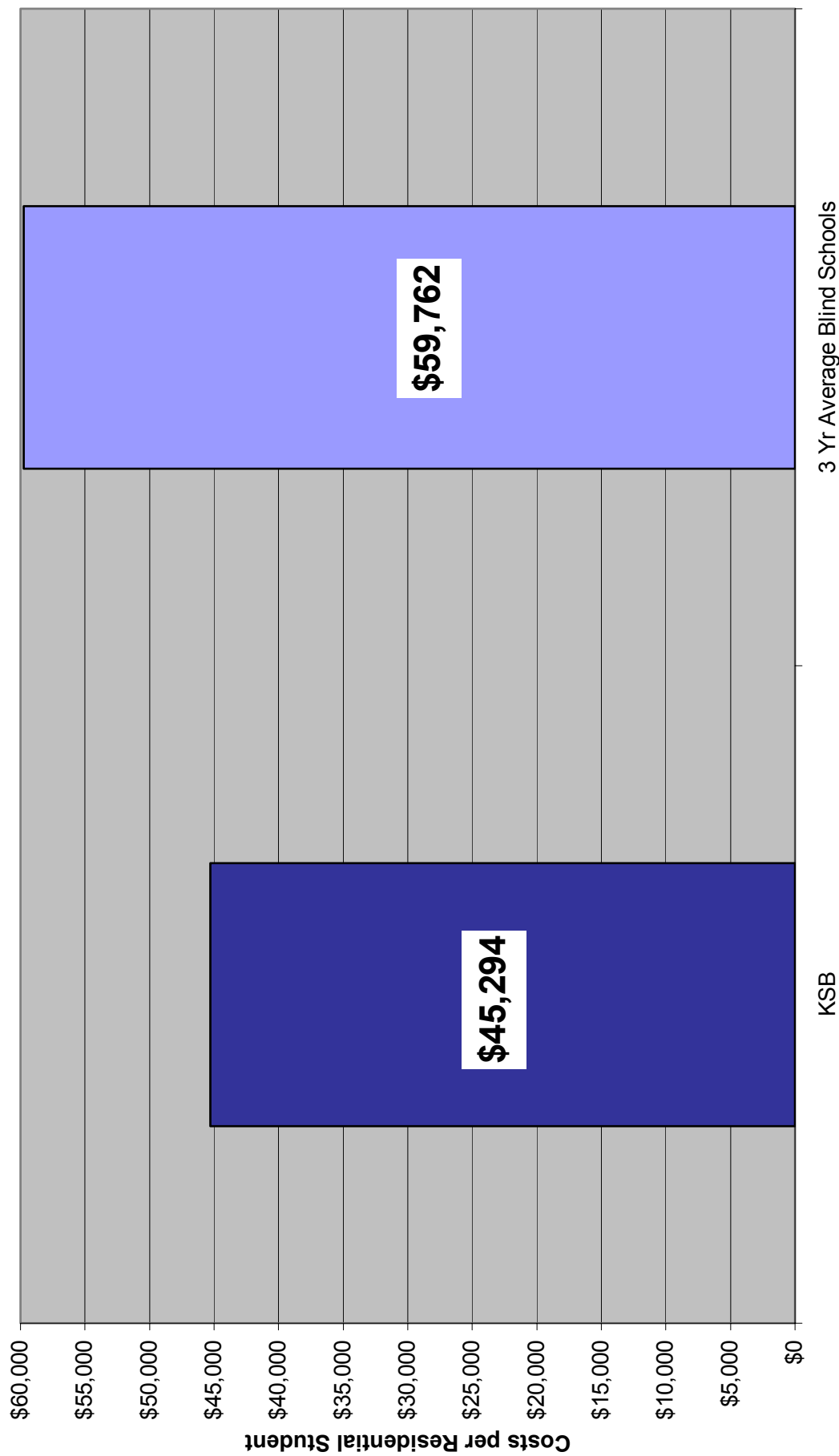
**Figure 17. Kentucky School for the Blind
Annual Cost per Day Student (Includes KIDS Programming)**



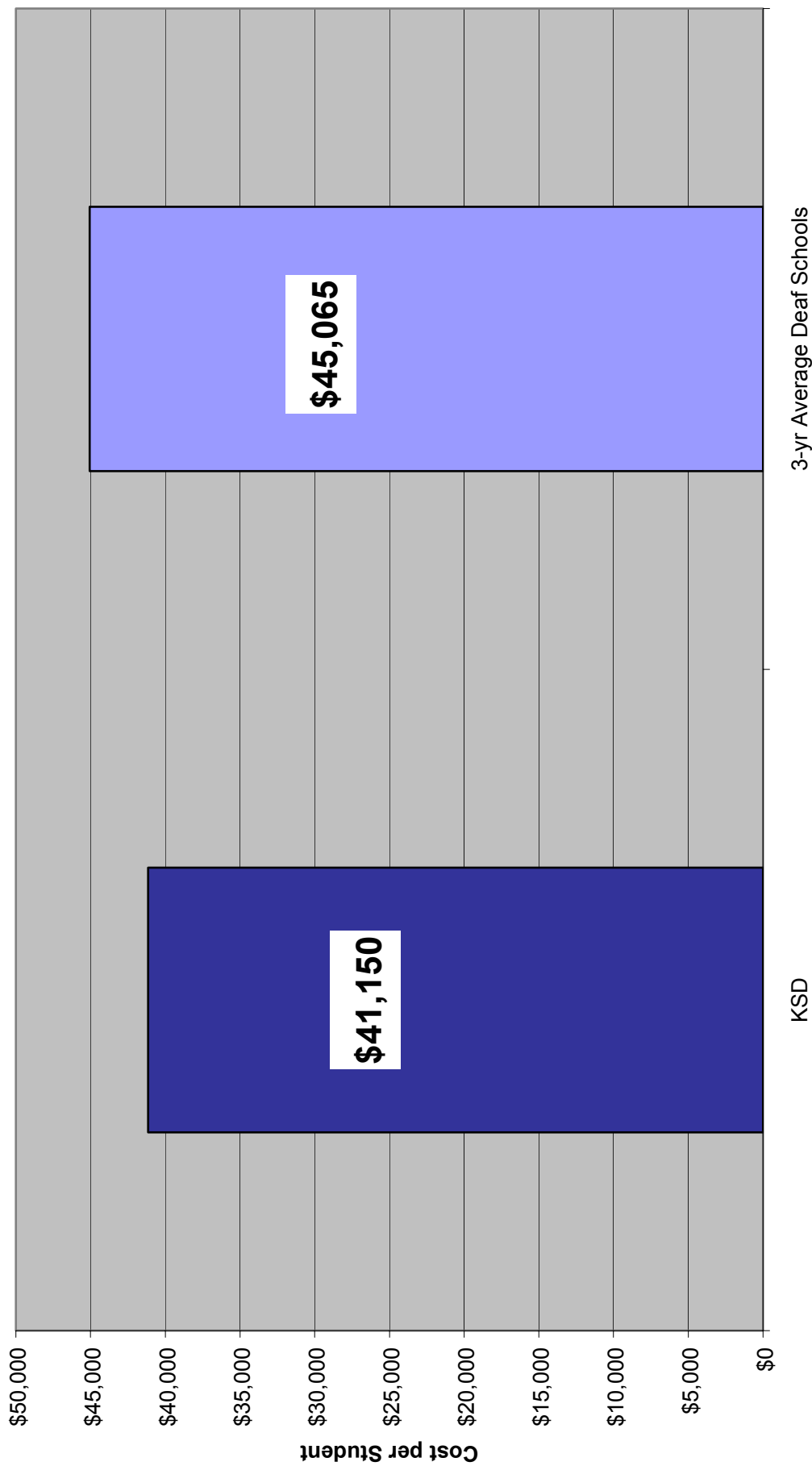
**Figure 18. Kentucky School for the Deaf
Annual Cost per Day Student**



**Figure 19. Kentucky School for the Blind
Yearly Costs per Residential Student
(State and Federal Funds only)**



**Figure 20. Kentucky School for the Deaf
Yearly Cost per Residential Student
(State and Federal Funds only)**



American Institutes for Research
Kentucky Department of Education
Financial Comparisons of Kentucky School for the Blind and Kentucky School for the Deaf
Robert J. Beadles, Jr., Ph.D., CRC

Equations and Data Source for Financial Costs for Residential Schools

<u>Label</u> FUNDING	<u>Data Category</u> General Institutional	<u>Description</u> Funding Sources	<u>Equation</u> STATE + FEDERAL + PRIVATE + OTHER	<u>Data Source</u> State Federal Private Other
ACREAGES	General Institutional	Institutional Facilities	ACREAGES	Campus Acreage
BUILDING	General Institutional	Institutional Facilities	BUILDING	Campus Buildings
SQFOOTGE	General Institutional	Institutional Facilities	SQFOOTGE	Campus Building Square Footage
TEACHDAY	General Institutional	Instructional Days	TEACHDAY	Instructional Days
SUMRDAYS	General Institutional	Summer Program Days	SUMRDAYS	Summer Program
RESIDAYS	General Institutional	Residential Days	TEACHDAY + RESIDAYS	Residential Days
RESWEEKS	General Institutional	Residential Weekends	RESWEEKS	Residential Weekend
TOTLSTUD	Student Enrollment	Student Enrollment	DAYSSTUD + RESSTUD	Student Enrollment
RESISTUD	Student Enrollment	Residential Students	RESISTUD	Residential Student Enrollment
DAYSSTUD	Student Enrollment	Day Students	DAYSSTUD	Day Student Enrollment
ADMINSTF	Administrative Staff	Administrative Staff	EXECADMN + SCHLADMN + ADMNSUPP	Executive Administration Office of School Administrator Administrative Support Staff
EXECADMN	Administrative Staff	Head Administrators	EXECADMN	Executive Administration
SCHLADMN	Administrative Staff	Principals, Directors, etc	SCHLADMN	Office of School Administrator

<u>Label</u>	<u>Data Category</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Equation</u>	<u>Data Source</u>
ADMNSUPP	Administrative Staff	Clerical and other support	ADMNSUPP	School Administrative Support
INSTRSTF	Instructional Staff	Instructional Staff	TEACHER + TEACHAID	Instructional Staff
TEACHER	Instructional Staff	Teachers	TEACHER	Teachers
TEACHAID	Instructional Staff	Teacher Aides	TEACHAID	Teacher Aides
INSTSUPP	Instructional Support	Instructional Support Services	MUSICTCH + ARTTEACH + PHYSEDUC + COACHES + LIBRARIN + COMPSPEC + MEDIAIDE + OTHRTCHR	Music Art Physical Education Coaches Librarians Computer Specialists Media Aides Other Teaching Specialists
MUSICTCH	Instructional Support	Instructional Support Services	MUSICSUP	Music
ARTTEACH	Instructional Support	Instructional Support Services	ARTTEACH	Art
PHYSEDUC	Instructional Support	Instructional Support Services	PHYSEDUC	Physical Education
COACHES	Instructional Support	Instructional Support Services	COACHES	Athletic Coaches
LIBRARIN	Instructional Support	Instructional Support Services	LIBRARIN	Librarians
COMPSPEC	Instructional Support	Instructional Support Services	COMPSPEC	Computer Specialists
MEDIAIDE	Instructional Support	Instructional Support Services	MEDIAIDE	Media Aides
OTHRTCHR	Instructional Support	Instructional Support Services	OTHRTCHR	Other Teaching Specialists
INSTOPER	Instructional Support	Instructional Operating Expenses	COMPTECH + INSTSUPP + TEXTBOOK	Computer/Technology Instructional Materials & Supplies Textbooks
COMPTECH	Instructional Support	Computer/Technology Expenses	COMPTECH	Computer /Technology Expenses
INSTSUPP	Instructional Support	Instructional Materials/Supplies	INSTSUPP	Instructional Materials & Supplies
TEXTBOOK	Instructional Support	Textbooks	TEXTBOOK	Textbooks

<u>Label</u>	<u>Data Category</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Equation</u>	<u>Data Source</u>
IDEASUPP	Student Support Services	Student Support Services	STUDSUPP + HEALTH	Student Support Services
STUDSUPP	Student Support Services	Student Support Services	ORNT&MOB + INTERPRT + OCCTHRPY + PHYTHRPY + THRPYAID + S<HRPY +JOBCOACH + TRANSITN + TECHSPEC + COUNSELR + SOCIALWK + CASEMNGR	Orientation and Mobility Specialist Interpreters Occupational Therapist Physical Therapists Physical Therapy Aides Speech/ Language Therapists Job Coaches Transition Specialists Technology Specialists Admissions & Guidance Social Workers Case Managers
ORNT&MOB	Student Support Services	Orientation and Mobility	ORNT&MOB	Orientation and Mobility Services
INTERPRET	Student Support Services	Interpreter Services	INTERPRET	Interpreter Services
OCCTHRPY	Student Support Services	Occupational Therapy	OCCTHRPY	Occupational Therapy
PHYTHRPY	Student Support Services	Physical Therapy	PHYTHRPY	Physical Therapy
THRPYAID	Student Support Services	Physical Therapy Aide	THRPYAID	Physical Therapy Aide
S<HRPY	Student Support Services	Speech and Language Therapy	S<HRPY	Speech and Language Therapy
JOBCOACH	Student Support Services	Job Coach	JOBCOACH	Job Coach
TRANSITN	Student Support Services	Transition Specialist	TRANSITN	Transition Specialist
TECHSPEC	Student Support Services	Technology Specialist	TECHSPEC	Technology Specialist
COUNSELR	Student Support Services	Counselor	COUNSELR	School Counselor
SOCIALWK	Student Support Services	Social Worker	SOCIALWK	Social Worker
CASEMNGR	Student Support Services	Case Manager	CASEMNGR	Case Manager

<u>Label</u>	<u>Data Category</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Equation</u>	<u>Data Source</u>
HEALTH	Student Support Services	Health Services	AUDIOLOGY + DENTAL + MEDICAL + LOVISION + NURSING + PSYCHLOGY	Audiology Services Dental Services Low Vision Services Medical Services Nursing Services Psychology/Psychology Services
AUDIOLOGY	Health Services	Audiology Services	AUDIOLOGY	Audiology Services
DENTAL	Health Services	Dental Services	DENTAL	Dental Services
MEDICAL	Health Services	Medical Services	MEDICAL	Medical Services
LOVISION	Health Services	Low Vision Services	LOVISION	Low Vision Services
NURSING	Health Services	Nursing Services	NURSING	Nursing Services
PSYCHLOGY	Health Services	Low Vision Services	PSYCHLOGY	Psychology/Psychiatric Services
OPERMAIN	Operation & Maintenance	Operations and Maintenance Services	CUSTODIL + MAINSRVC + SECURITY + UTILITY	Custodial Services Maintenance Services Security Services Utilities
CUSTODIL	Operations and Maintenance	Custodial Services	CUSTODIL	Custodial Services
MAINSERV	Operations and Maintenance	Operations and Maintenance	MAINSERV	Operations and Maintenance
UTILITY	Operations and Maintenance	Utility Services	UTILITY	Utility
TRANSPRT	Transportation	Transportation	DAYTRANS + GOHMTTRAN + OTHRTRAN	Transportation
DAYTRANS	Student Transportation	Day Student Transportation	DAYTRANS	Student Transportation- Daily
GOMHTRAN	Student Transportation	Go-Home Student Transportation	GOMHTRAN	Student Transportation – Go Home
OTHRTRAN	Student Transportation	Other Student Transportation	OTHRTRAN	Student Transportation – Other
AUXILARY	Auxiliary Services	Auxiliary Services	ATHLETIC + FOODSRVC + RESISRVC	Auxiliary Services
ATHLETIC	Auxiliary Services	Athletics	ATHLETIC	Athletics

<u>Label</u>	<u>Data Category</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Equation</u>	<u>Data Source</u>
FOODSRVC	Auxiliary Services	Food Services	FOODSTFF + FOODCOST	Food Services
FOODSTFF	Auxiliary Services	Food Services	FOODSTFF	Food Service Staff
FOODCOST	Auxiliary Services	Food Services	FOODCOST	Food /Supply Costs
RESISRVC	Auxiliary Services	Residential Services	RESISTFF + RESIOPER	Residential Services
RESISTFF	Auxiliary Services	Residential Staff	RESISTFF	Residential Staff
RESIOPER	Auxiliary Services	Residential Operating Expense	RESIOPER	Residential Operating Expenses
GENLADMN	General Administration	General Administration Services	ACCTFINC + GRANTDEV + MAILROOM + PERSONNL + PRINTPUB + PUBLICPR + PURCHASE + TELECOMM + OTRGASUP	Accounting and Finance Grants Development Mail Personnel Printing/Publishing Public Relations Purchasing Telecommunications Other Support Services
ACCTFINC	General Administration	Support Services	ACCTFINC	Accounting and Finance
GRANTDEV	General Administration	Support Services	GRANTDEV	Grants Development
MAILROOM	General Administration	Support Services	MAILROOM	Mail Services
PERSONNL	General Administration	Support Services	PERSONNL	Personnel Services
PRINTPUB	General Administration	Support Services	PRINTPUB	Printing and Publishing
PUBLICPR	General Administration	Support Services	PUBLICPR	Public Relations
PURCHASE	General Administration	Support Services	PURCHASE	Purchasing and Warehousing
TELECOMM	General Administration	Support Services	TELECOMM	Telecommunications
OTRGASUP	General Administration	Support Services	OTRGASUP	Other Support Services
SUMMER	Summer Programs	Summer Programs	SUMMRPGM + SUMMRSTF	Summer Programs

<u>Label</u>	<u>Data Category</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Equation</u>	<u>Data Source</u>
SUMMER	Summer Programs	Summer Programming	SUMMRPGM	Summer Programming
SUMMER	Summer Programs	Summer Program Staff	SUMMRSTF	Summer Program Staff
OUTREACH	Outreach Programs	Outreach Programs	OUTPRGRM + OUTSTAFF	Outreach Programs
OUTPRGRM	Outreach Programs	Outreach Programming	OUTPRCRM	Outreach Programming
OUTSTAFF	Outreach Programs	Outreach Program Staff	OUTSTAFF	Outreach Program Staff
O&MSPECL	Outreach Programs	O & M Specialists	O&MSPECL	Orientation & Mobility Specialists

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Appendix B:

Kenneth D. Randall, Ed.D., Superintendent, Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, Tucson, Arizona

Observations of the Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB) and the Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD), April 2002

**Observations of the Kentucky School for the Blind
(KSB)
and the
Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD)
April 2002**

Kenneth D. Randall, Ed.D., Superintendent
Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
Tucson, Arizona

Background:

The Commonwealth of Kentucky contracted with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to provide a "thorough and comprehensive study of the program offerings and facilities needed to meet the unique educational needs of hearing and visually impaired students" in the state. AIR subsequently identified six experts in the areas of the Deaf or Hard of Hearing and Vision to provide guidance and clarify important issues. Qualitative and quantitative data was obtained via communication among KSB, KSD, and AIR. Staff members presented preliminary directions concerning the review from AIR to the KSB/KSD Oversight Committee on March 25, 2002 and to identified stakeholders at a meeting in Frankfort on Thursday, March 28, 2002.

I was able to accompany staff members from AIR on site visits to KSB and KSD. I understood that the review from AIR would be composed of five elements: (1) Architectural review with recommendations, (2) Program delivery review with recommendations, (3) Fiscal review of all programs and funding recommendations, (4) Efficient utilization of skilled staff review, and (5) Recommendations for state of the art campuses that meet the needs of students and serve as statewide resource centers. What follows are observations and recommendations in those areas, plus additional thoughts about educational services for Blind or visually impaired and Deaf or hard of hearing children.

(1) Architectural Review with Recommendations

It was possible to observe some of the facilities at the Kentucky School for the Blind and the Kentucky School for the Deaf. I believe it is important to view the location of the Kentucky School for the Blind from a program perspective. Proximity to a variety of mass transportation is an important element in the provision of services to students with a loss of vision. Louisville provides a greater variety of transportation options that can be utilized by a student than that offered in Danville. Louisville also has the attraction of proximity to the American Printing House for the Blind and the Teacher Training Programs operated by the University of Louisville.

The Kentucky School for the Deaf is one of the oldest residential schools for the Deaf in the country. It is central to economy of Danville. The location of Danville is more physically convenient to the State of Kentucky than Louisville. Major political issues would result if either the Kentucky School for the Blind or the Kentucky School for the Deaf were relocated from their present locations.

The facilities at both the Kentucky School for the Blind and the Kentucky School for the Deaf appear to be underutilized. The amount of available floor space per student is far above that in place at the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, the Colorado Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, the California Schools for the Deaf and the California School for the Blind, and the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

Consideration must be made regarding the impact of instructional programming for either the Blind or the Deaf. It appears that facilities were constructed for a comprehensive preK-12 program in both schools and that those facilities have been impacted with a decline in student enrollment. The use of the facilities may need to be reviewed again as the role and mission of both schools are examined.

Summary: Facility determination at both KSB and KSD needs is dependent upon the clarification of the role and mission of both schools as defined by the Kentucky Department of Education. Some of the space that was designed in both schools for instructional or residential use may need to be altered to provide external services to the State of Kentucky.

Suggestions:

- a. Meet with leadership personnel representing KDE, KSB, and KSD to clarify the inter-related mission and responsibility of each organization in the provision of services to sensory impaired children and students from birth through 21 in the State of Kentucky.
- b. Translate the inter-related missions into language that would identify the utilization of KSB and KSD as statewide resources.
- c. Develop a projection of educational programs, fiscal requirements, and facilities required for the operation of KSB and KSD as site-based schools as well as for the operation as statewide resources which may provide access for some students to services structured and presented in a regionalized format.
- d. Contract to develop a Master Plan for Facilities predicated on items a, b, and c.
- e. Utilize the services of an educational facilities programmer to correlate current space utilization at KSB and KSD with space allocations required to provide services as a statewide resource.
- f. Obtain data regarding the demographics of the general population in the State of Kentucky and apply low incidence rates for sensory impaired children and students to project needed service capacity by function.
- g. Analyze the costs of alteration of facilities at KSB and KSD and determine potential costs for physical space in facilities that could be utilized as regionalized centers.
- h. Obtain current zoning requirements in place at KSB and KSD as well as appraised values.
- i. Determine buildings that could be sold, demolished, or potentially reutilized to increase revenue to the State of Kentucky.

- j. Share projected plans with stakeholders at KDE, KSB, and KSD as well as Local Education Agencies and private service providers.

(2) Program Delivery Review with Recommendations

I utilized the contents of the "National Agenda for the Education of Children and Youths with Visual Impairments, Including Those with Multiple Disabilities" and "Achieving Educational Equality- A National Agenda for the Education All Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children" as a format for the presentation of observations. Consolidated goal statements from the two National Agendas are presented along with observations of the current status of each based upon a review of previous documents and the site visit.

1. Early Identification, Referral, and Intervention

Background: The research literature and professional best practice in the areas of Vision and Hearing Loss both report significant differences that occur when children are identified early and receive intervention.

Information was obtained regarding the early identification programs in Kentucky. It appears that there is a systematic attempt in hospital locations to identify at risk children. There does not appear to be a consistent, organized system of identification among stakeholders and parents. Children are reported as being identified, but organizational structures that are in place preclude the sharing of information among stakeholders and parents. It is imperative that children in low incidence categories of Vision and Hearing Loss receive intervention from practitioners who have background, training, and experience in the impact of a loss of vision on spatial relationships or the impact of a loss of hearing on language stimulation and acquisition. The identification process for children and reporting relationships among stakeholders and parents for children from birth-2 and 3-5 warrants significant attention.

Suggestions:

- a. Review the mission, responsibility, and status of service providers in the areas of birth – 2 and 3 through 5 in the State of Kentucky.
- b. Identify a lead agency responsible for planning, organizing, directing, reporting, budgeting, and monitoring services to sensory impaired children from birth – 2 and 3 through 5.
- c. Charge the lead agency with the responsibility to develop a “seamless” reporting system between and among hospitals, KSB, KSD, Local Education Agencies, and private service providers.
- d. Initiate inter-governmental agreements or Memorandums of Understanding to record and stabilize roles and responsibilities.

- e. Develop a homepage for the lead agency that provides parents, consumers, and service providers with contact information concerning the agency and related service providers.
- f. Allocate funding to provide public service announcements to the State of Kentucky regarding the existence of the lead agency and services provided.

Additional thoughts:

Professionals who have background, training, and experience should provide intervention services to the sensory impaired. A model for the delivery of intervention and the provision of services in either a home based or school environment should be considered and implemented to maximize the potential of sensory impaired children.

2. Language and Communication Access

Background: The research literature and professional best practice in the areas of Vision and Hearing Loss stress the importance of informational access for children. Children with a loss of vision should have exposure to visual aids and Braille. Children with a loss of hearing should have access to a communication driven program provided by language proficient teachers and staff who communicate directly in the child's choice of communication modality.

The staff at the Kentucky School for the Blind and the Kentucky School for the Deaf both report that their delivery system to children is consistent with issues related to language and communication access. The probability of more significant outcomes as a result of early intervention should occur through a review of organizational structures currently in place for infants and toddlers from birth-2 years of age and children from 3-5. A structure should be in place that allows parents to have access to procedures and policies which ensure the right of all parents to full participation and equal partnership in the educational process.

Suggestions:

- a. Utilize the services of the designated lead agency to organize, direct, fund, and monitor the provision of language and communication intervention services to sensory impaired children from birth to 2 years and early childhood service providers from 3 through 5.
- b. Implement a "Child Find" process to identify sensory impaired children and students.

- c. Select a curriculum to provide services to parents and sensory impaired children and students such as Ski-High, the Oregon Project, or Insite.
- d. Provide training to staff members regarding the implementation of services based on the chosen curriculum.
- e. Establish funding for trained staff to meet with parents of sensory impaired children and students on a regular and consistent basis.
- f. Utilize qualitative or quantitative measures to record student growth over time.

3. Synchronistic Partnerships

Background: Federal law requires the provision of a free and appropriate education for children from birth - 21 through a process that enables students to have access to a full array of placement options.

Staff members and stakeholders in Kentucky report that there is not a "seamless" system that enables parents to identify service providers for children with vision and/or hearing loss. There does not appear to be a consistent organized practice within the State of Kentucky that enables service providers to communicate with each other or with parents.

Suggestions:

- a. Review the mission and roles of the KDE, KSB, KSD, Local Education Agencies, Institutions of Higher Education, consumer organizations, and private service providers.
- b. Utilize the services of an identified lead agency to communicate the mission and role of various service providers to the State of Kentucky.
- c. Establish quarterly meetings with personnel representing service providers to develop work plans and review progress.
- d. Revise current communication practices to develop and institutionalize consistent communication vehicles between and among service providers.

4. Service Providers

Background: Various states have implemented educational reform movements to enhance student instruction and accountability.

The State of Kentucky does not appear to have a database that indicates the population of children who have either a vision and/or hearing loss. KSB and KSD provided staff lists and student rosters from which AIR developed student-staff ratios. Service providers do not appear to be involved in the

determination of appropriate ratios or have access to a planned program of professional development in either the area of the Vision or Hearing. However, professional development workshops are now being provided by KSB.

Suggestions:

- a. Establish a database of sensory impaired children from birth to 2 and students from 3 to 5 for early childhood education programs.
- b. Apply incidence rates of sensory impaired children and students within the State of Kentucky to determine potential demographics in enrollment patterns throughout the State.
- c. Consider the reallocation of some staff members at KSB and KSD to provide technical assistance for parents, children, and students.
- d. Implement cross training activities that would enable personnel at KSB or KSD to deal with the complex learning needs of children and students.
- e. Provide incentives for staff to attend professional staff development activities either within the State of Kentucky or via long distance technology.

5. Placement, Programs, and Services

Background: Local education programs are required to ensure that all students have access to a full array of program options.

Service providers and practitioners report that there is not a coordinated plan to provide parents with awareness as to the existence of program options. There appears to be a "disconnect" between and among the Kentucky Department of Education, KSB, KSD, Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), and parents. It is essential that assessment of students be conducted by personnel who have knowledge, skills, and abilities in the presentation of instruction to students who have either a visual or hearing loss.

Suggestions:

- a. Develop a coordinated plan to provide parents with awareness information as to the existence of program options for children and students.
- b. Identify and develop resource directory identifying program service providers.
- c. Utilize the services of a lead agency to inform parents of program options and service providers.

- d. Identify and utilize the knowledge, skills, and abilities of successful adult role models who are sensory impaired that can assist in the provision of services in either pre-service or professional development.
- e. Develop, implement, and monitor progress made by the KDE, KSB, and KSD in a coordinated work plan.
- f. Utilize the services of individuals who have background, training, and experience in the assessment of sensory impaired children or students.

6. Media and Technology Accessibility

Background: Children who have a loss of Vision or Hearing should have access to instructional materials in a similar manner and a similar time as their non-disabled peers.

Service providers report that, although significant progress has been made, there is still a need to review the provision of media and technology services to students who have either a loss of Vision or Hearing. Accommodations, assistive and adaptive technologies and emerging technologies must be maximized to improve learning for identified students. Specifically, budgetary considerations must be made for the inordinate cost of providing accessibility to students with a loss of Vision. Although integrated instruction is preferable for all students, there is a clear need for consideration to be given to those students who need hardware and software to meet their instructional needs. Practitioners report that hardware and software for students with a visual need may cost six times as much as that provided to other learners.

Suggestions:

- a. Determine how existing long distance technology could be utilized by children, students, staff members, consumers, and service providers.
- b. Identify the current and anticipated media and technology needs among the KDE, KSB, and KSD.
- c. Review, identify, and fund infrastructure requirements to fully implement media and technology enhancements among service providers.
- d. Provide pre-service and professional development to integrate the utilization of media and technology into the delivery of instruction.
- e. Modify existing practices to provide children, students, staff members, and parents with access to media and technology.
- f. Provide funding to maintain or replace media and technology through a planned process.

Additional thoughts:

Technology has significantly altered the provision of instruction to all students. The demands of educational reform and performance accountability have increased the presence of technology in classrooms and schools.

Three major issues in technology are application, acquisition, and maintenance. The application needs for blind or visually impaired students tend to be in the area of access to existing software. The application needs for Deaf or hard of hearing students tend to be in the manipulation of communication and language.

Acquisition issues for the Blind or visually impaired tend to be much more difficult because of the cost of accessibility and connectivity. Inordinate costs are involved in achieving accessibility and connectivity for a particular enrollment. It has been estimated that the cost for providing accessibility and connectivity for blind or visually impaired students is approximately six times that of the usual operation.

Acquisition issues for Deaf or hard of students tend to focus on the degree to which the software is congruent with instructional benchmarks identified within educational reform. There are few, if any, state resource centers of site-based schools that have established standards for the selection of software.

Maintenance costs for the repair or replacement of technology hardware and software are expensive. Economies of scale can be realized when a state utilizes the services of a site based school or designated statewide resource center in the organization, planning, and implementation of technology services to students who are Deaf or Blind.

It is imperative that delivery of services be organized based upon an individual State Technology Plan. Many states have established departments or agencies with the sole focus of co-coordinating technology services. Some states have developed standards to be followed in the application, acquisition, and maintenance of technology.

The federal government has assisted in the acquisition of equipment by establishing an "E" Rate for technology. Generally, funds are provided to those schools that provide services to lower income populations. Applications for federal funds are usually processed through a state designated department or agency.

Technology advances have been made at both the Kentucky School for the Blind and the Kentucky School for the Deaf. Even greater advances could be made for students and staff at both schools if efforts were coordinated in some type of organizational fashion. Those efforts could spearhead the development of a planned change that would provide sensory impaired students in geographic regions with similar levels of access.

7. Personnel Preparation

Background: Many educators in the area of Vision or Hearing entered the education profession as a result of federal funds that became available as a result of the Elementary and Secondary School Act of 1965. Many of those educators of the "baby boom" era are now close to the age of retirement.

The University of Louisville has a teacher preparation program in the area of Vision and Eastern Kentucky University has a teacher preparation program in the area of the Deaf or Hard of Hearing. It does not appear that either program will provide enough graduates in the years ahead to meet the critical shortage of trained personnel. New collaborations and initiatives among practitioners and training programs must address the serious shortage of qualified teachers and administrators.

Suggestions:

- a. Review faculty profiles at KSB and KSD to identify current and future personnel needs.
- b. Enhance cooperation and collaboration between KSB and the University of Louisville and KSD and Eastern Kentucky University as well as other institutions of higher education that provide pre-service and professional development.
- c. Provide incentives for staff members to access professional development.
- d. Determine concrete monetary incentives for students to enter teacher-training programs and remain in the field.
- e. Utilize media opportunities to communicate the need for additional trained personnel.

8. Instruction and Research

Background: Educational reform is taking place to narrow the differences in instruction between students with sensory impairments and their non-disabled peers. Accommodations must be made to enable students to have access to instruction in the disability specific core curricula. Federal and state dollars should be spent on effective, research based programs and practices.

The Kentucky School for the Blind and the Kentucky School for the Deaf have staff members who recognize the learning requirements of students. Each school had practitioners who reported that the technical assistance provided by the Kentucky Department of Education made a significant, positive impact.

Suggestions:

- a. Review current testing practices to provide appropriate accommodations for students who are sensory impaired.
- b. Develop additional indicators of success to measure progress in academic instruction, social, and emotional growth.
- c. Implement portfolio assessments for sensory impaired students.
- d. Develop and disseminate a statewide accountability plan that reflects expectations and instructional practices with sensory impaired students.
- e. Coordinate the delivery of curricula, instruction, and accountability to service providers of sensory impaired students.
- f. Develop the utilization of selected applied research activities at KSB and KSD in a manner that does not distract from instructional time.

(3) Fiscal review of all programs and funding recommendations.

It was not possible to make a determination regarding the fiscal review of programs and funding recommendations during the site visit. It is important to note that the database from the Alabama Institutes for the Deaf and the Blind (AIDB) as utilized by the American Institute for Research is nationally recognized. Funding recommendations must be reviewed to provide a fiscal incentive for the potential regionalization of services. The State of Arizona utilizes both inter-agency governmental agreements and contracts with public schools to provide for a partnership of services to students through local school districts. I recommend that the State of Kentucky explore how other states have organized the provision of regionalized services.

Summary: The database from AIDB is appropriate. Funding models for the potential regionalization of services must provide for some financial incentive to obtain collaboration and cooperation.

(4) Efficient utilization of skilled staff review

The State of Kentucky is blessed with the amount of staff members at both the Kentucky School for the Blind and the Kentucky School for the Deaf who possess appropriate background, training, and experience with the needs of sensory impaired students. A review of the faculty profile indicates that both schools have large numbers of staff members who could retire in the near future. It does not appear that either the University of Louisville or Eastern Kentucky University can provide either KSB or KSD with adequate personnel within a given time frame. It also does not appear that the needs for professional development can also be provided by the teacher training programs within the State or through the resources of the Kentucky Department of Education.

It is imperative to note that the learning needs of sensory impaired students have altered significantly. There are more students with complex learning needs at both KSB and KSD. The State of Kentucky will should assess the skills and abilities of current staff members at KSB and KSD to provide technical assistance to students in other school programs. Staff members within LEAs should become more aware of low vision needs of students. They will also need to become more familiar with the language acquisition needs of students who are Deaf or the amplification needs of students who have received cochlear implants. Neither KSB nor KSD have sufficient personnel who are cross-trained to meet the variety of instructional needs that are present within the State.

Summary: The education of children who have a loss of vision or hearing is a relatively small, but highly demanding occupation for educators and responsibility for either local school districts or the State of Kentucky. Recruitment and retention activities must be implemented to insure that children have access to appropriately trained personnel.

Suggestions:

- a. Review faculty profiles at KSB and KSD to determine current and future personnel needs.
- b. Correlate requirements for graduation and instruction with the personnel needs at KSB and KSD.
- c. Identify staff members who can assist in the provision of disability specific curricula.
- d. Modify instructional practices to provide children and students with access to the core curricula and compensatory skills.
- e. Consider the utilization of Medicaid in the Public Schools (MIPS) to assist in the provision of appropriate services.

(5) Recommendations for state of the art campuses that meet the needs of students and serve as statewide resource centers.

Again, the configuration of physical facilities is highly dependent upon a clarification of the role and mission of either KSB or KSD. Each school was originally designed to serve as an alternative educational placement for students who typically expected to receive the majority of their elementary and secondary education from the state schools. I recommend that various scenarios be designed that would fully utilize space that is currently available. Further, a database should be developed to identify the potential enrollment of sensory impaired students in the State of Kentucky and facilities altered or configured to be responsive.

Summary: Educational policy may dictate the degree to which the physical facilities of KSB and KSD are utilized as either Pre-K through 12 schools or as locations through

which resources are provided to the State of Kentucky. It is imperative that incidence rates and demographics be developed to assist in strategic planning for facilities.

Suggestions:

- a. Clarify the inter-related missions, roles, and functions of the KDE, KSB, and KSD.
- b. Utilize current data and applied statistics to identify facility needs at KSB and KSD as preK-12 service providers and as statewide resources.
- c. Identify and fund the KSB and KSD as statewide resource centers for sensory impaired children and students in Kentucky.
- d. Modify position descriptions at KSB and KSD to provide for both the delivery of managerial responsibilities and for the provision of instructional accountability.

Other Issues:

1) Organizational Structure:

Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet established the American School for the Deaf in West Hartford, Connecticut in 1817. A review of the literature reveals that approximately eight students were enrolled with the majority of the students as teenagers. Demographics at the time indicated that a residential school would be needed to provide boarding space for an enrollment of low incidence students from a broad geographical area. A Board of Directors governed the school. Laurent Clerc, the first Deaf teacher of the Deaf in the United States, was the classroom teacher. He noted some communication difficulties between and among the students due to the lack of utilization of a consistent sign language. Clerc was instrumental in using sign language that was developed in France in the incorporation of communication strategies that would enhance literacy in English.

The Perkins School for the Blind was established at Waterford, Massachusetts by Sydney Howe in 1829. The enrollment and demographics of students at the Perkins School for the Blind was similar to that of the students in attendance at the American School for the Deaf. Again, it was deemed necessary to have a residential school that would provide boarding space for an enrollment of low incidence students from a broad geographical area. Instructors at Perkins focused on the importance of students being able to read Braille to access the curriculum. A Board of Directors governed the operation of the school.

Other schools for the Deaf and schools for the Blind were established in the Eastern portion of the United States as the population of the United States increased. As the population increased, a determination was made to establish a school for the Deaf and a school for the blind in each state. The model of the residential schools established in West Hartford, Connecticut and Waterford, Massachusetts was emulated due to the low incidence factor of students who were sensory impaired. A variation did occur regarding governance structure, with many states

placing the schools under public control through a reporting relationship to the executive officer of an individual state.

The mission and role of state supported residential schools for the Deaf and the Blind remained relatively unchanged until the passage of P.L. 94-142 in 1975. Many individual schools for the Deaf and the Blind have altered their functions and operations to become a part of a state system of education.

Currently, the majority of public schools for the Deaf and schools for the blind report either directly or indirectly to the Department of Education in each state. There are twelve “dual” schools, serving students who are Deaf and students who are Blind. The “dual” schools tend to be governed by a Board of Directors that is appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Some states, i.e., Arizona have designated a school as a state agency to provide leadership, organization, and delivery of instruction to students throughout the state via a partnership arrangement with public schools.

There may be a tendency for some to believe that a “dual” school may be more effective and efficient than two separate schools for the Deaf and for the Blind. Certainly, there are economies of scale that may be realized in the centralization of some administrative services. The major disadvantage of “dual” schools is the perceived imbalance of educational services to either Deaf or Blind students. There are some national experts who are adamantly opposed to “dual” schools because of the belief that blind students and the services provided tend to be delivered by supervisors and administrators who have background, training, and experience in the area of the Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

Educational reform movements in various states have increased the importance of the delivery of curriculum, instruction, and accountability. Some professionals believe that more students could be served in a particular state if the educational resources were allocated, organized, and administered in a different manner. As a result, some states have designated a school for the Deaf or a school for the Blind as a “state resource center,” responsible for not only the provision of preK-12 instructional services to a site based enrollment, but also to students enrolled and staff employed by individual school districts or students enrolled or staff employed through formal partnership arrangements between school districts and the state designated resource center. Those arrangements tend to be formalized through memoranda of understanding, inter-agency agreements or contracts for service.

2) Regionalization

Various states have implemented forms of regionalization in the delivery of instruction to students who are Deaf or Blind. Illinois, Texas, New York, and Arizona are specific examples of statewide efforts. Some county or local school districts have created the equivalent of regionalized services in both urban and rural areas to provide services to low incidence populations.

Organizational structure is a key element in the success of regionalized services. The services need to be organized and delivered in a manner that establishes and maintains a partnership

relationship between and among stakeholders. The utilization of Executive Councils composed of representatives from local school districts and the provider of regionalized services can be of great assistance in the implementation and maintenance of activities.

Arizona has established a membership fee to become a member of a cooperative and a separate “fee for service”. The cost of each is reviewed on an annual basis and becomes a part of either an interagency agreement or a contract between the state agency and individual school districts. Financial incentives must be in place for school districts to consider entering into a cooperative arrangement. School districts tend to find that economies of scale are realized in the cost of delivery of instruction and in the selection and evaluation of personnel. Operational conflicts can occur when personnel are employees of a state agency, but physically located in public school environments.

It appears that each state in the United States is “unique” in terms of geography and transportation issues. It may be advisable for a state to utilize existing regionalized services and adapt them to meet the needs of sensory impaired students. Each region may have “unique” features but the organization and delivery of instruction is consistent. Provision should be made for each region to evolve and develop over a period of time. Experience in Arizona has certainly demonstrated that the needs of students and staff in the rural and remote areas of Northeastern Arizona are dramatically different from the needs and staff in the urban areas of Phoenix and Tucson.

Additional Thoughts:

1. KSB and KSD should establish strong ties with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.
2. Clusters of employment within the State of Kentucky should be identified as well as the knowledge, skills, and abilities employers desire for employees.
3. Develop and utilize a Mission Integration Project (MIP) using the mission of the KDE, KSB, and KSD to achieve desired results.
4. Report progress to the KDE and Advisory Councils at KSB and KSD through the utilization of the MIP.
5. Implement the “National Agendas” for each population.
6. Design, develop, and implement a student records management system that will provide data regarding student achievement among service providers.
7. Identify existing performance indicators that can be utilized to measure the progress of students.
8. Develop a program whereby mentors who are Blind or Deaf can serve as instructional resources.

Conclusion:

It is difficult to provide in-depth recommendations on the basis of a single site visit. The materials provided by the American Institute for Research served as a valuable guide in understanding the complexity of issues present within the State of Kentucky in relation to the needs of sensory impaired children. Documents representing the "National Agendas" in the area of Vision and Deafness were utilized as the framework for observations of the Kentucky School for the Blind and the Kentucky School for the Deaf. The utilization of those two source documents may be of great assistance to the schools, the Kentucky Department of Education, and the State of Kentucky in providing free and appropriate public education for sensory impaired students.

Appendix C

Stakeholders Group list

Stakeholders Group	
Dr. James Atkins	Centre College, Danville, KY
Sharon Bessinger	Director, VIPS
Peggy Blanton	Special Education Director Fayette Co. Schools
Rick Boggess	B/VI Teacher, Owensboro County Schools
Carol Dahmke	Parent of 2 students at KSB; KSB Advisory Board, VIPS Office Manager
William Evans	American Printing House for the Blind
Kathy Eversole	Interim Director, Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative
Pauletta Felman	KSB parent
Lori Fitzgerald	Representing Special Education Director, Jefferson County Public Schools
Dr. Debbie Haydon	Eastern KY University D/HH Teacher preparation
Eddie Johnson	KSD Advisory Board
Lou Ann Jones	Eastern Region Coordinator for the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening. Kentucky Infants' Sound Start, CCSHCN
Ginger Lovett	D/HH Teacher, KSD
Mona McCubbin	Louisville Oral School for the Deaf
Jan Moseley	Representing Director of Special Ed; Jefferson Co. Schools
Jane Paynter	Representing Superintendent, Boyle Co. Schools
Dr. William Penrod	University of Louisville B/VI Teacher Preparation
Denise Placido	Commissioner, Kentucky Department for the Blind
Pam Rogers	Boyle County Schools
Carla Ruschival	AER Representative, Grandparent of KSB student
Dr. Bobbie Beth Scoggins	Exec. Director, KY Commission on Deaf & Hard of Hearing
James Shaw	President, KY Chapter, American Council for the Blind
Dr. Tuck Tinsley	President, American Printing House for the Blind
Maury Weedman	Accessibility Coordinator for the Louisville Free Public Library
Rita Zirnheld	KSD Staff – mainstream program, interpreter

Appendix D:

Protocols for telephone interviews with:

- ◆ Blind/Visual Impairment and Deaf/Hard of Hearing Experts
- ◆ District Directors of Special Education
- ◆ District Level B/VI and D/HH Teachers
- ◆ Recruitment Letters to Parents of B/VI and D/HH Students
- ◆ Parents of KSB Students
- ◆ Parents of KSD Students
- ◆ Parents of B/VI and D/HH Public School Students
- ◆ Recruitment Letters to Graduates of KSB/KSD
- ◆ KSB/KSD Graduates

Protocols for site visit interviews with:

- ◆ KSB/KSD Administrators
- ◆ KSB/KSD Teachers
- ◆ Stakeholders Group
- ◆ KSB/KSD Teachers Focus Group
- ◆ KSB/KSD Parent Focus Group Participation Permission Letter
- ◆ KSB/KSD Student Focus Group
- ◆ KSB Town Meeting
- ◆ KSD Town Meeting

Kentucky Evaluation of the State Schools for the Deaf and Blind
Expert Screening Protocol

Name: _____ Expert in: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Institution/Organization: _____

Position: _____

Interviewer: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

1. What is your current area of study/focus as it pertains to B/VI or D/HH education? What kinds of work are you doing in this area (i.e. policy research, pedagogical/educational research, clinical or experimental practice, etc)? In what other areas of B/VI or D/HH education do you feel you are an expert? What kind of insights do you think you would bring to the project?
2. What are your perspectives regarding state schools for B/VI and D/HH children? What do you consider to be the current state of these schools ?
3. Can you give me some examples of what you consider to be models of exemplary programs in B/VI or D/HH education, either at the state, regional, or local level (public or private)? (probe for specific names of programs) What makes these programs exemplary?
4. What are the advantages/ disadvantages of educating B/VI and D/HH students at state schools versus local schools or regional programs? How the quality and appropriateness of education for B/VI and D/HH students placed at state schools be measured?
5. What criteria should determine whether a deaf/hard of hearing or blind/visually impaired child should be determined in his/her local community or in a state school? If appropriate resources were provided locally, would state schools still be needed? If yes, for what types of children and under what conditions?
6. What do you believe should be the future of B/VI or D/HH education? Specifically, how should the status quo be changed? How do state schools fit into this future? Are there specific states you can refer to that you believe are moving in this direction?
7. With what seminal documents in the fields of B/VI or D/HH education should the study team be familiar?
8. Who would you recommend we consider as expert advisors to a study of this type?
9. NOTES:
10. Is interviewee willing to serve as a project expert consultant? Yes ____ No ____
11. If yes, were any specific conditions and/or limitations associated with this service discussed or mentioned?

**Project: Review of the Kentucky Schools for the Deaf and Blind
District Special Education Director Phone Interview**

Respondent: _____

Phone: _____

District: _____

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Interviewer: _____

Hi, my name is _____, and I'm from the American Institutes for Research (AIR). We have been contracted by the Kentucky Department of Education to conduct a study of the Schools for the Blind and Deaf. I'm calling to talk to you about B/VI and D/HH education in your district as well as the future of B/VI and D/HH education in the state of Kentucky.

The interview should take about an hour, and everything you tell me will be kept strictly confidential.

Screening questions to see if interview with SE director is needed:

How long have you been special education director for this district?

Do you have B/VI and D/HH students in your district? Have you ever had B/VI and D/HH students in your district? **(If answer is No, then say:** "Thank you very much for your time. We need to speak with special education directors who have had experience with B/VI and D/HH students. Could you refer me to some of your colleagues in other districts who have this experience?")

(If the answer is Yes, ask: "Have you ever referred students from your district to attend either the KSB or KSD?")

If the SE director has experience with B/VI and D/HH students, schedule the interview. The interview should take about an hour).

(For actual interview, say:)

Before we get started, I would like to thank you for your participation and reassure you that all information collected today will be kept strictly confidential. Neither your name nor the name of your school district will be directly linked to any reporting of this data. The purpose of this interview is to collect data to help better the educational opportunities for B/VI and D/HH students in Kentucky.

(If you do have demographic data that answers the following questions, start with Question 6)

Enrollment/Placement

My first set of questions is about district enrollment and placement of B/VI and D/HH students.

- 1) **(If you do not have demographic data that answers these questions), ask:** How many special education students do you have attending schools in your district out of a total student population? How many are B/VI and how many are D/HH? *(Ask to have demographic data emailed/faxed to you)*
- 2) What placements are currently being used for B/VI and D/HH students in your district?
- 3) Have you placed students at KSB/KSD before? **(Probe: If the answer is Yes, ask:)** How recently have you placed students at KSB/KSD?
- 4) Have you placed students at a regional program managed by KSD/KSB? If so, how recently?

- 5) What are the primary criteria used by the ARC to determine placement at KSB/KSD vs. a regional program or a local program?
- 6) Do you have anything in writing describing these criteria? If the placement decision is made on the professional judgement of the ARC, what factors would the Committee consider in distinguishing between local, state school or regional program placement? (**Probe about specific placements of students, what issues were involved in those particular placements**)

Local Resources

- 7) How do schools in your district serve B/VI and D/HH students?
 - a) What services do you currently provide to B/VI and D/HH students?
 - b) What resources are available, and what resources are lacking at the local level?
 - c) Does your district have its B/VI or D/HH program in which students are served in one location vs. in regular local schools?
 - d) Why did your district create such a program? How long have you had it in operation? How is it working?
 - e) Is your district served by a regional program managed by KSB/KSD?
 - f) (**If yes, ask:**) When was this program started? How is that program working for your district? What are some of the successes, difficulties you are having with it?
 - g) What kind of support do the outreach resource centers at KSB/KSD provide to your district?
 1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of those centers?
 2. What recommendations would you make for the outreach centers?**Probe:** What do outreach centers need to do to help your district serve B/VI and D/HH students as effectively and appropriately as possible?
 - h) Are there other local programs, such as private schools, that serve B/VI and D/HH students in your area? Can you name some of the more predominant alternative providers?

Quality of State Schools

- 8) In your experience, what are the advantages, and disadvantages, of educating B/VI and D/HH students at KSB/KSD vs. in local schools? (**Probe:** which services are best provided in which setting?)
- 9) Based upon your experience, how would you judge the quality and appropriateness of education for B/VI and D/HH students placed at KSB/KSD?

Probe: How do you think an education at KSB/KSD compares to the education B/VI and D/HH students receive in your district?
- 10) What is your overall impression of the quality of the instructional and residential program at KSB/KSD? (**Probe:** ask about both instructional and residential at both schools)

Change and the Future

- 11) How would you describe the relationship between KSB/KSD and your district?
- 12) As a special education director, what issues related to B/VI and D/HH education would you like to see the state address? What specifically would you recommend?
- 13) If the state schools for the blind and deaf did not exist, how would that affect your district? What resources and support would your district need in order to serve this population?
- 14) What things –if any – would you like to see changed at KSB/KSD, or in regards to B/VI and D/HH instruction in Kentucky?
- 15) What is your vision for the future of B/VI and D/HH education in Kentucky?
 - a) Anything substantially different than what is currently in place? If yes, what?
 - b) Specifically, how do you think the state can best educate its B/VI and D/HH students?

Conclusion

- 16) Is there anything else regarding KSD/KSB or more general regarding education in Kentucky that you think we should know?
- 17) If your own child were B/VI or D/HH, would you want them to attend KSD or KSB? If yes, why, and under what conditions? If no, why not?

District B/VI and D/HH Teacher Interview Protocol

Name: _____
Phone: _____
School and District or Region: _____
Position: _____
Interviewer: _____
Date: _____ Time: _____

Thank you for agreeing to this interview. My name is _____, and I work for the American Institutes for Research in Palo Alto, CA. Our organization has been contracted by the Kentucky Department of Education to conduct a study on the state schools for the deaf and blind. We are looking at various data and information to determine what needs to be done to help all B/VI and D/HH students in Kentucky reach academic proficiency.

All information obtained today will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study. Your name will not be used in reporting of this information. As an unbiased, independent research firm, we have no opinion regarding state schools for the deaf and blind, or any of the other subjects we will discuss today. We just want to learn about your experiences to inform our report.

Background

1. Please describe your job to me: are you itinerant, traveling to different schools; work in a resource room based at one school; or work with B/VI or D/HH students in another teacher's classroom? How many schools and districts do you serve?
2. How many students do you serve, and what services do you provide to them?
3. What credentials do you hold? Where did you get your B/VI or D/HH certification and when?

District and State School Placement

4. What placements are currently being used for B/VI or D/HH students in your district?
5. Have students been placed at KSB/KSD before? If so, what criteria have been used to distinguish in-district versus state school placements?

Probe: For example, what emphasis is placed on parental preference as opposed to the child's educational needs, or severity of condition?

Outcomes and Core Curriculum

6. By what criteria should we define success for a B/VI or D/HH student? How do you define and measure success for your students? What objective measures do you use?
7. What are the main barriers and facilitating factors in regards to success for B/VI or D/HH students?
8. How do you align the core curriculum with special needs instruction for your students? What difficulties have you faced in trying to address both the core curriculum and special needs?
9. Are your students participating in statewide assessments? Why or why not?

Appropriateness and Quality of Services and Education

10. What is your opinion of the quality, availability, and accessibility of B/VI or D/HH teacher preparation programs in Kentucky?
11. How do you judge the quality and appropriateness of education for B/VI or D/HH students placed at KSB/KSD? Based on what criteria or experience?
12. Please describe the quality and appropriateness of what is currently in place for B/VI or D/HH students in Kentucky. We are not referring only to the state schools, but the broad spectrum of services that are available (e.g. state schools, regional, local).

13. What works particularly well under the current system?
14. What could be improved upon? What specific recommendations do you have on how to improve B/VI or D/HH education in Kentucky?
15. Does KSB/KSD serve you and your district as a statewide resource? What needs to be in place in order for the state schools to serve as statewide resources, and what services do you think they should offer?
16. What should be the direction of educational services for B/VI or D/HH students in Kentucky over the next five to ten years? What services need to be provided, and how should those services be provided? What does the state need to do *now* to get there?
17. What is your perception of the current adequacy of early intervention services for B/VI or D/HH infants and toddlers in Kentucky?

Conclusion

18. What things –if any – would you like to see changed in regards to B/VI or D/HH education in Kentucky?
19. Is there anything else regarding B/VI or D/HH education in Kentucky that you think we should know?



AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

February 19, 2002

Dear Parents,

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) has been contracted by the Kentucky Department of Education to study the education and related services offered to hearing and visually impaired students in the state, including the Schools for the Deaf and Blind. As part of the study, we will be interviewing parents of deaf and blind children attending, and not attending, the state schools. We would like to know about your experiences with your child's school placement, special services, and the quality of education your child is receiving. The interview questions are attached for your review. The interview will be conducted through the telephone and/or email. *If you have a preferred alternative method of communication, please let us know so that we may accommodate you.*

As we want to safeguard your privacy, we will not contact you until you have notified the special education director in your school district. Please let the special education director know how we may contact you.

If you are not contacted for an interview, we would still welcome your comments about deaf and blind education in Kentucky. You may contact us through e-mail, telephone, TTY, or fax (650.858.0958; Attn: Jenifer Harr).

We appreciate your participation and insights.

Sincerely,
Thomas B. Parrish, Ed.D.
Project Director
650.843.8119
Tparrish@air.org

Jenifer Harr, Ph.D.
Associate Project Director
650.493.2209 (V/TTY)
Jharr@air.org

American Institutes for Research
1791 Arastradero Road
Palo Alto, CA 94304-1337



AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

March 25, 2002

Dear Parents,

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) has been contracted by the Kentucky Department of Education to study the education and related services offered to hearing and visually impaired students in the state, including the Schools for the Deaf and Blind. As part of the study, we will be interviewing parents of deaf and blind children attending, and not attending, the state schools. We would like to know about your experiences with your child's school placement, special services, and the quality of education your child is receiving. The interview questions are attached for your review. The interview will be conducted through the telephone and/or email. *If you have a preferred alternative method of communication, please let us know so that we may accommodate you.*

As we want to safeguard your privacy, we will not contact you until you have notified Bill Melton at KSD (859.239.7017 ext. 2051, V/TTY) or Dr. Ralph Bartley at KSB (502.897.1583). Please let Mr. Melton or Dr. Bartley know how we may best contact you.

If you are not contacted for an interview, we would still welcome your comments about deaf or blind education in Kentucky. You may contact us through e-mail, telephone, TTY, or fax (650.858.0958; Attn: Jenifer Harr).

We appreciate your participation and insights.

Sincerely,

Thomas B. Parrish, Ed.D.
Project Director
650.843.8119
Tparrish@air.org

Jenifer J. Harr, Ph.D.
Associate Project Director
TTY 650.493.2209
Jharr@air.org

American Institutes for Research
1791 Arastradero Road
Palo Alto, CA 94304-1337



AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

March 29, 2002

Dear Parent,

As you know, American Institutes for Research is conducting a study for the Kentucky Department of Education about the education and related services offered to hearing impaired and visually impaired students, including the Kentucky Schools for the Deaf and Blind. We would like to encourage you to participate by contacting us to be interviewed for the study. The Department of Education is very eager for the results of our research and we have only a few more weeks in which to get input from parents about their child's education.

To be interviewed for this important study, please contact one of our research associates, Kassandra Chaney or Christina Ziegler-McPherson by e-mail, telephone, TTY, fax, or Instant Messenger.

Kassandra's contact information is:

Phone: 650-843-8219

Kchaney@air.org

Yahoo IM: kchaney1333

AOL IM: kchaney1333

Christina's contact information is:

Phone: 650 843-8258

Cziegler@air.org

Yahoo IM: chrismzcp

AOL IM: chrismaczieg

We appreciate your participation and insights.

Sincerely,

Thomas B. Parrish, Ed.D.

Project Director

650.843.8119

Tparrish@air.org

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1791 Arastradero Road

Palo Alto, CA 94304-1337

TTY: 650-493-2209

Fax: 650-858-0958

Website: www.air.org



AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

Evaluation of the Kentucky Schools for the Deaf and Blind

Interview Questions for Parents of Students at KSB

Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Interviewer: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Thank you for agreeing to this interview. My name is _____, and I work for the American Institutes for Research in Palo Alto, CA. As you know, our organization has been contracted by the Kentucky Department of Education to conduct a study on the state schools for the deaf and blind. We will be looking at various data and information to determine what needs to be done to help B/VI or D/HH students at KSB and KSD reach academic proficiency.

Any information that you can provide will be helpful in informing this study. Just to be clear, this is not an audit of the school or a compliance review.

All information obtained today will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study. Your name will not be used in reporting of this information. As an unbiased, independent research firm, we have no opinion regarding state schools for the deaf and blind, or any of the other subjects we will discuss today. We just want to learn about your experiences to inform our report.

Background questions of parents:

Did you or your child's other parent attend KSB as a student?
Do you or your child's other parent have a vision impairment?

Background questions about child:

- 1) How old is your child? Is your child in a grade at school? If so, what grade is your child in currently?
- 2) What is the nature of your child's vision disability- blind (congenital vs. adventitious), low vision, multiple disabilities? Is your child learning Braille or can he/she read with large print and other assistive technology?
- 3) How long has your child attended a KSB program? Is your child a residential or day student, or attending the short course or summer school program?
- 4) How long does it take your child to get to school from home? How does your child get to KSB? Do you have any concerns about your child's commute to and from school?
- 5) What are your post school goals for your child? College, work, live and take care of self?
- 6) Has your child attended a school other than KSB? If so, where and for how long? What type of school was this- public, private?
- 7) What were the reasons for the decision to send your child to KSB? Where did you want your child to attend school?

Probe: Were the local public schools considered as an option for your child? Why was your child not placed in a local public school?

- 8) How well does the school communicate with you regarding your child's educational needs and progress?

Probe: With whom do you communicate most frequently at KSB? Does the school provide you with a phone list to reach a specific person on the school staff? Do you receive regular communications from the school? If so, in what form? By phone? By mail?

General questions:

- 9) What do you think B/VI students should be able to do and know by the time they leave school? By what criteria do you define success for a B/VI student? What needs to be done to achieve this? How should these criteria be best measured?
- 10) What kinds of things should schools emphasize when educating B/VI students?
- 11) Are you pleased with the education your child is receiving at KSB?
- 12) What aspects of your child's education do you think are particularly good?
- 13) What aspects of your child's education do you think could be improved?
- 14) Based on your experience as the parent of a B/VI child, what are your thoughts about the quality of education and services for B/VI students in Kentucky? We are referring to the broad spectrum of services that are available (e.g. state schools, local public schools). What suggestions do you have about how the state could improve B/VI education in Kentucky?
- 15) What do you think should be the direction of educational services for B/VI students over the next five-to-ten years? What services should be provided, and how? What does the state of Kentucky need to do *now* to be able to provide those services in the future?
- 16) Is there anything else regarding your child's education or B/VI education in Kentucky that you think we should know?



AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

Evaluation of the Kentucky Schools for the Deaf and Blind

Interview Questions for Parents of Students at KSD

Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Interviewer: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Thank you for agreeing to this interview. My name is _____, and I work for the American Institutes for Research in Palo Alto, CA. As you know, our organization has been contracted by the Kentucky Department of Education to conduct a study on the state schools for the deaf and blind. We will be looking at various data and information to determine what needs to be done to help B/VI and D/HH students at KSB and KSD reach academic proficiency.

Any information that you can provide will be helpful in informing this study. Just to be clear, this is not an audit of the school or a compliance review.

All information obtained today will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study. Your name will not be used in reporting of this information. As an unbiased, independent research firm, we have no opinion regarding state schools for the deaf and blind, or any of the other subjects we will discuss today. We just want to learn about your experiences to inform our report.

Background questions about the parents:

Did you or your child's other parent attend KSD as a student?

Are you or your child's other parent deaf or hard of hearing?

Background questions about the student:

- 1) How old is your child?
- 2) How did your child become D/HH? At what age? Does your child use hearing aids? Cochlear implant? How does your child communicate? (Verbal, ASL, etc.) What is the primary communication used at home? (speech, ASL, etc.) Does your child have other disabilities?
- 3) Is your child in a grade at school? If so, what grade is your child in currently?
- 4) How long has your child attended a KSD program? Is your child a residential or day student or participating in a regional program?
- 5) How long does it take your child to get to school from home? How does your child get to KSD or regional program? Do you have any concerns about your child's commute to and from school?
- 6) What are your post school goals for your child? College, work, live and take care of self?
- 7) Has your child attended a school other than KSD or regional program? If so, where and for how long? What kind of school was this- public, private?
- 8) What were the reasons for the decision to send your child to KSD or the regional program vs. the public schools? Where did you want your child to attend school?

Probe: Were the local public schools considered as an option for your child? Why was your child not placed in a local public school?

- 9) How well does the school communicate with you regarding your child's educational needs and progress?

Probe: With whom do you communicate most frequently at KSB? Does the school provide you with a phone list to reach a specific person on the school staff? Do you receive regular communications from the school? If so, in what form? By phone? By mail?

General questions:

- 10) What do you think D/HH students should be able to do and know by the time they leave school? By what criteria do you define success for a D/HH student? What needs to be done to achieve this? How should these criteria be best measured?
- 11) What kinds of things should schools emphasize when educating D/HH students?
- 12) Are you pleased with the education your child is receiving at KSD?
- 13) What aspects of your child's education do you think are particularly good?
- 14) What aspects of your child's education do you think could be improved?
- 15) Based on your experience as the parent of a D/HH child, what are your thoughts about the quality of education and services for deaf/hard of hearing students in Kentucky? We are referring to the broad spectrum of services that are available (e.g. state schools, regional programs, local public schools). What suggestions do you have about how the state could improve D/HH education in Kentucky?
- 16) What do you think should be the direction of educational services for D/HH students over the next five-to-ten years? What services should be provided, and how? What does the state of Kentucky need to do *now* to be able to provide those services in the future?
- 17) Is there anything else regarding your child's school or education, or D/HH education in Kentucky that you think we should know?



AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

Evaluation of the Kentucky Schools for the Deaf and Blind

Interview Questions for Parents of Public School Students

Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Interviewer: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Thank you for agreeing to this interview. My name is _____, and I work for the American Institutes for Research in Palo Alto, CA. As you know, our organization has been contracted by the Kentucky Department of Education to conduct a study on the services provided to B/VI and D/HH students in the state. We will be looking at various data and information to determine what needs to be done to help B/VI and D/HH students improve academic performance.

Any information that you can provide will be helpful in informing this study. Just to be clear, this is not an audit of the school or a compliance review.

All information obtained today will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study. Your name will not be used in reporting of this information. As an unbiased, independent research firm, we have no opinion regarding state schools for the deaf and blind, or any of the other subjects we will discuss today. We just want to learn about your experiences to inform our report.

Background question of parents:

Do you or your child's other parent have a vision impairment or a hearing impairment?

Background questions:

- 1) How old is your child? What is the nature of your child's disability?
(If he/she is B/VI) Is he/she blind or visually impaired (congenital vs. adventitious), low vision, multiply disabled? Is your child learning Braille, or can he/she read with large print and other assistive technology?
(If he/she is D/HH) How did your child become deaf or hard of hearing? At what age? Does your child use hearing aids? Cochlear implants? How does your child communicate? (Verbal, ASL, etc) What is the primary communication used at home (speech, ASL, etc) Does your child have other disabilities?
- 2) Is your child in a grade at school? If so, what grade is your child in currently?
- 3) Where does your child attend school? Is that your neighborhood public school, district program, or a regional program managed by one of the state schools for the deaf and blind?
- 4) How long does it take your child to get to school from home? How does your child get to school? Do you have any concerns about your child's commute to and from school?
- 5) What are your post school goals for your child? College, work, live and take care of self?
- 6) How long has your child attended his/her current school? Has your child attended school anywhere else? If so, where and for how long?
- 7) What were the reasons for the decision to send your child to his/her current school?
- 8) How well does the school communicate with you regarding your child's educational needs and progress?

Probe: With whom do you communicate most frequently at the school? Does the school provide you with a phone list to reach a specific person on the school staff? Do you receive regular communications from the school? If so, in what form? By phone? By mail?

- 9) What kinds of special services does your child receive?
- 10) Was KSB/KSD considered as an option for your child? Why was it decided that your child would not attend the state school? What were the other options considered?
- 11) Has your child ever participated in a summer or inter-session or any other special program or event at KSB/KSD? If so, what was your child's experience?

General questions:

- 12) What do you think B/VI or D/HH students should be able to do and know by the time they leave school? By what criteria do you define success for a B/VI or D/HH student? What needs to be done to achieve this? How should these criteria be best measured?
- 13) What kinds of things should schools emphasize when educating B/VI or D/HH students?
- 14) Are you pleased with the education your child is receiving?
- 15) What aspects of your child's education do you think are particularly good?
- 16) What aspects of your child's education do you think could be improved?
- 17) Based on your experience as the parent of a B/VI or D/HH child, what are your thoughts about the quality of education and services for B/VI or D/HH students in Kentucky? We are referring to the broad spectrum of services that are available (e.g. state schools, regional programs, district programs, local public schools). What suggestions do you have about how the state could improve B/VI or D/HH education in Kentucky?
- 18) What do you think should be the direction of educational services for B/VI or D/HH students over the next five-to-ten years? What services should be provided, and how? What does the state of Kentucky need to do *now* to be able to provide those services B/VI or D/HH students?
- 19) Is there anything else regarding your child's school or education, or B/VI or D/HH education in Kentucky that you think we should know?



AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

February 27, 2002

Dear Graduates of KSB and KSD,

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) has been contracted by the Kentucky Department of Education to study the Schools for the Deaf and Blind. As part of the study, we will be interviewing KSB and KSD graduates. We would like to know about your experiences and education at KSB or KSD. The interview questions are attached for your review. The interview will be conducted through the telephone and/or email.

If you have a preferred alternative method of communication, please let us know so that we may accommodate you.

As we want to safeguard your privacy, we will not contact you until you have notified Bill Melton at KSD (859.239.7017 ext. 2051, V/TTY) or Dr. Ralph Bartley at KSB (502.897.1583). Please let Mr. Melton or Dr. Bartley know how we may best contact you.

If you are not contacted for an interview, we would still welcome your comments about deaf and blind education in Kentucky. You may contact us through e-mail, telephone, TTY, or fax (650.858.0958; Attn: Jenifer Harr).

We appreciate your participation and insights.

Sincerely,

Thomas B. Parrish, Ed.D.
Project Director
650.843.8119
Tparrish@air.org

Jenifer Harr, Ph.D.
Associate Project Director
650.493.2209 (TTY)
Jharr@air.org

American Institutes for Research
1791 Arastradero Road
Palo Alto, CA 94304-1337



AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

March 29, 2002

Dear Graduate,

As you know, American Institutes for Research is conducting a study for the Kentucky Department of Education about the education and related services offered to hearing impaired and visually impaired students, especially the Kentucky Schools for the Deaf and Blind. We would like to encourage you to participate by contacting us to be interviewed for the study. Your thoughts and feelings about your educational experiences are very important to us.

To be interviewed for this study, please contact one of our research associates, Kassandra Chaney or Christina Ziegler-McPherson by e-mail, telephone, TTY, fax, or Instant Messenger.

Kassandra's contact information is:

Phone: 650-843-8219

Kchaney@air.org

Yahoo IM: kchaney1333

AOL IM: kchaney1333

Christina's contact information is:

Phone: 650 843-8258

Cziegler@air.org

Yahoo IM: chrismzcp

AOL IM: chrismaczieg

We appreciate your participation and insights.

Sincerely,

Thomas B. Parrish, Ed.D.

Project Director

650.843.8119

Tparrish@air.org

American Institutes for Research

1791 Arastradero Road

Palo Alto, CA 94304-1337

TTY: 650-493-2209

Fax: 650-858-0958

Website: www.air.org

KSB/KSD Graduate Protocol

School: _____
Name of Respondent: _____
Graduation Year: _____
Interviewer: _____
Date: _____

Thank you for agreeing to this interview. My name is _____, and I work for the American Institutes for Research in Palo Alto, CA. Our organization has been hired by the Kentucky Department of Education to conduct a study on the state schools for the deaf and blind. As part of the study, we are interviewing graduates of KSB and KSD about their experiences and education.

All information obtained today will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study. Your name will not be used in reporting of this information. We just want to learn about your experiences to inform our report.

General Background

1. How many years did you attend KSB/KSD? For which grades? Were you a residential or day student?
2. How far did you have to travel to attend KSB/KSD when you were a student there? How long (in minutes/hours) did the journey take to get from school to home? How hard or easy was that commute for you? Why?
3. Did you attend other schools? For how long and for what grade levels? What type of school was it- your neighborhood public school, other public school, private school?
4. What are you doing now: employed, workshop, in-state college, out-of-state college, vocational school, or none of these? If employed, what kind of work are you doing? Are you living on your own, with friends, or with family? How long have you been working/attending school/living at home, etc.?

Appropriateness and Quality of Education

5. Do you think you received a good education at KSB/KSD? In what ways do you think it was good?

Probe: What was good about the academics, extracurricular activities, socially, access to counseling and technology?

6. In what ways was the education you received at KSB/KSD not good?

Probe: What was not good about the academics, extracurricular activities, socially, access to counseling and technology?

Probe: If you attended other schools, how did the school(s) compare to the education and services you received at KSB/KSD?

Residential Experiences

7. (If not answered above and if a residential student) Did you live in a dorm on campus? If so, what did you like most about living at KSD/KSB?
8. What did you like the least about living at KSD/KSB?

9. What things would you like changed about living at KSD/KSB?

Transition to Adult Life

10. Do you think KSB/KSD taught what you needed to learn to be successful in life? Were you provided with the necessary academic, vocational, and life skills you needed to get a job or go to college?
11. What things, if any, do you wish you had learned at KSB/KSD but did not?
12. Before you left school, what kind of college or career guidance did you receive? Who gave you guidance? What kinds of work experience or living skills did you receive while a student at KSB/KSD?

Conclusion

13. What suggestions do you have for improving the educational programs or experiences for students at KSB/KSD?
14. If you had to do it all over again, would you want to attend KSB/KSD? If no, what kind of school do you wish you had attended?
15. Is there anything else regarding KSB/KSD or your education that you think we should know?

KSB/KSD Administrator Interview Protocol

Name: _____
Phone: _____
E-mail: _____
Institution/Organization: _____
Position: _____
Interviewer: _____
Date: _____ Time: _____

Thank you for agreeing to this interview. My name is _____, and I work for the American Institutes for Research in Palo Alto, CA. As you know, our organization has been contracted by the Kentucky Department of Education to conduct a study on the state schools for the deaf and blind. We will be looking at various data and information to determine what needs to be done to help B/VI and D/HH students at KSB and KSD reach academic proficiency.

Any information that you can provide will be helpful in informing this study. Just to be clear, this is not an audit of the school or a compliance review.

All information obtained today will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study. Your name will not be used in reporting of this information. As an unbiased, independent research firm, we have no opinion regarding state schools for the deaf and blind, or any of the other subjects we will discuss today. We just want to learn about your experiences to inform our report.

1. How long have you worked with B/VI or D/HH students?
2. How long have you worked for KSB/KSD?
3. What is your sense of the quality and appropriateness of what is currently in place for B/VI or D/HH students in Kentucky? I'm referring the broad spectrum of services that are available (e.g. state schools, regional, local).
4. What works particularly well under the current system?
5. What could be improved upon? What specific recommendations do you have on how to improve B/VI or D/HH education in Kentucky?
6. Are there ways we can make better use of the school's facilities?
7. What do you see as the advantages/disadvantages of educating B/VI or D/HH students at state schools versus local schools or regional programs?
8. How should the quality and appropriateness of education for B/VI or D/HH students placed at state schools be measured?
9. What criteria should determine whether a B/VI or D/HH child should be served in his/her local community or in a state school? If appropriate resources were provided locally, would state schools still be needed? If yes, for what types of children and under what conditions?
10. What should B/VI or D/HH students be able to do and to know by the time they leave school? By what criteria do we define success for a B/VI or D/HH student at every school? What needs to be done to achieve this? How are these outcomes best measured?
11. What educational outcomes should be emphasized for B/VI or D/HH students and, what might be done by the schools to improve them?
12. How would you describe your relationship with other Kentucky schools? What kinds of services, classes or programs are available for B/VI or D/HH children who attend at local schools?
13. What kind of relationship is there between this school and local universities? How many of your teachers were credentialed at local universities? What kinds of professional development do you offer them?

14. Are you able to get the professional staff that you need? If no, what needs to be done to remedy this?
15. Are there ways in which the state could substantially improve educational services for B/VI or D/HH students without substantially increasing costs?
16. How should educational services for B/VI or D/HH students evolve in Kentucky over the next five to ten years? What does the state need to do *now* to get there?
17. Is there anything else regarding KSD/KSB or B/VI or D/HH education in Kentucky that you think we should know?

KSB/KSD Teacher Interview Protocol

Name: _____
Phone: _____
E-mail: _____
Institution/Organization: _____
Position: _____
Interviewer: _____
Date: _____ Time: _____

Thank you for agreeing to this interview. My name is _____, and I work for the American Institutes for Research in Palo Alto, CA. As you know, our organization has been contracted by the Kentucky Department of Education to conduct a study on the state schools for the deaf and blind. We will be looking at various data and information to determine what needs to be done to help B/VI and D/HH students at KSB and KSD reach academic proficiency.

Any information that you can provide will be helpful in informing this study. Just to be clear, this is not an audit of the school or a compliance review.

All information obtained today will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study. Your name will not be used in reporting of this information. As an unbiased, independent research firm, we have no opinion regarding state schools for the deaf and blind, or any of the other subjects we will discuss today. We just want to learn about your experiences to inform our report.

Background

1. How long have you been teaching B/VI or D/HH students?
2. How long have you been teaching at KSB/KSD?
3. Have you ever taught elsewhere? If yes, where and for how long?

Placement

4. For what type of students is KSB/KSD a particularly appropriate placement?
5. Are there some students for whom this is a less appropriate placement? If yes, what types of schools and what other types of alternative services would be better for them?

Appropriateness and Quality of Services and Education

6. Please describe the quality and appropriateness of what is currently in place for B/VI or D/HH students in Kentucky? We are not referring only to the state schools, but the broad spectrum of services that are available (e.g. state schools, regional, local).
7. What works particularly well under the current system?
8. What could be improved upon? What specific recommendations do you have on how to improve B/VI or D/HH education in Kentucky?
9. What should B/VI or D/HH students be able to do and to know by the time they leave school? By what criteria do we define educational success for a B/VI or D/HH student? What needs to be done to achieve this? How are these outcomes best measured?
10. Are there ways in which the state could substantially improve educational services for B/VI or D/HH students without substantially increasing costs?
11. How should educational services for B/VI or D/HH students evolve in Kentucky over the next five to ten years? What does the state need to do *now* to get there?

Outcomes and Core Curriculum

12. What are the expectations for students at KSB/KSD?

- a. To what standards do you hold your students?
 - b. Is it realistic to hold KSB/KSD students to the same standards as those applied to students in other schools? Why or why not?
 - c. How do you define and measure 'success' for your students? (academically and post-secondary)
 - d. Judging from your experience, how are B/VI or D/HH students doing? To what factors do you contribute students' achievement or lack of it?
- 13. Are students participating in statewide assessments? Is it realistic?
 - 14. How is the core curriculum aligned with special needs instruction for the students? What have been the difficulties of addressing both the core curriculum and special needs?

Conclusion

- 15. What things –if any – would you like to see changed at KSB/KSD, or in regards to B/VI or D/HH instruction in Kentucky?
- 16. What is your vision for the future of B/VI or D/HH education in Kentucky?
 - a) Anything substantially different than what is currently in place? If yes, what?
 - b) Specifically, how do you think the state can best educate its B/VI or D/HH students?
- 17. Is there anything else regarding KSD/KSB or B/VI or D/HH education in Kentucky that you think we should know?
- 18. If your own child were B/VI or D/HH, would you want them to attend KSD or KSB? If yes, why, and under what conditions? If no, why not?

ADDRESS IF THERE IS TIME:

Administration

- 19. Is the school administration responsive to the needs of the teachers and students? In what ways yes, and in what ways not?

Professional Development

- 20. What is your opinion of the teacher training programs in the area of B/VI or D/HH education? Appropriate? Strengths/weaknesses? Suggestions?

Post-secondary Transition (reflection of expectations)

- 21. How well do you believe KSD/KSB students are prepared for the post-secondary transition?
- 22. What vocational options are available? What higher education options are encouraged?

Integration Program

- 23. To what extent does integration into local schools take place for students at KSB/KSD? Strengths/weaknesses?

Stakeholders' Meeting Protocol

Thank you for coming to meet with us today. Our names are Tom Parrish (Project Director), Jenifer Harr (Associate Project Director), and Kassandra Chaney (Research Associate). We work for the American Institutes for Research in Palo Alto, CA. As you know, our organization has been contracted by the Kentucky Department of Education to conduct a study on the state schools for the deaf and blind. We will be looking at various data and information to determine what needs to be done to help B/VI and D/HH students at KSB and KSD reach academic proficiency. We will be giving a presentation about our organization and the study itself, after which we'll answer any questions regarding the study approach. The purpose of the "stakeholder" group is to discuss diverse perspectives regarding B/VI and D/HH education in KY. After the presentation, we would like to pose some questions to the group about these perspectives.

We would really like to hear from each of you. We are interested in all of your opinions and feelings. We only ask that one person speak at a time during the discussion. If at any time you would like clarification about any of the questions I'm asking, please feel free to interrupt me.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

- Power Point presentation (30 minutes)

Note: After the Power Point presentation, we will address any particular questions or comments that they may have pertaining to the study approach itself before directing questions to them.

1. We'd like you to describe the quality and appropriateness of what is currently in place for B/VI and D/HH students in Kentucky? We are not referring only to the state schools, but the broad spectrum of services that are available (e.g. state schools, regional, local).
2. What works particularly well under the current system?
3. What could be improved upon? What specific recommendations do you have on how to improve B/VI and D/HH education in Kentucky?
4. How can we make better use of the facilities and services available?
5. What should B/VI and D/HH students be able to do and to know by the time they leave school? By what criteria do we define success for a B/VI or D/HH student at every school? What needs to be done to achieve this? How are these outcomes best measured?
6. What educational outcomes should be emphasized for B/VI and D/HH students and, what might be done by the schools to improve them?
7. Are there ways in which the state could substantially improve educational services for B/VI and D/HH students without substantially increasing costs?
8. How should educational services for B/VI and D/HH students evolve in Kentucky over the next five to ten years? What does the state need to do *now* to get there?
9. Is there anything else regarding KSD/KSB or B/VI and D/HH education in Kentucky that you think we should know?

KSB/KSD Teacher Focus Group Protocol

School: _____
Number of Respondents: _____
Grade levels of Respondents: _____
Facilitators: _____
Date: _____

[*Note to interviewer:* It is important that the group be comfortable and that they be fully aware of the purpose of the discussion and how the focus group will proceed. Information is being solicited from the teachers on several aspects of B/VI and D/HH education at KSB and KSD. Time is limited – be sure to allocate time accordingly. Strive for an informal atmosphere and encourage broad participation to the extent possible. Pass out name tags and markers, and sign-up sheet. Then go around the room so everyone can say their first name.]

[*Note:* A “script” is given below. You should paraphrase and expand while covering the points mentioned.]

Thank you for coming to talk with us today. Our names are Tom Parrish (Project Director), Jenifer Harr (Associate Project Director), and Cassandra Chaney (Research Associate). We work for the American Institutes for Research in Palo Alto, CA. Our organization has been contracted by the Kentucky Department of Education to conduct a study on the state schools for the deaf and blind. We will be looking at various data and information to determine what needs to be done to help B/VI and D/HH students at KSB and KSD reach academic proficiency.

We will be posing questions to this focus group about your experiences and perspectives at this school. We want to know what works and what doesn’t, and what issues are important. Any information that you can provide will be helpful in informing this study. Just to be clear, this is not an audit of the school or a compliance review.

All information obtained today will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study. Your names will not be used in reporting of this information. As an unbiased, independent research firm, we have no opinion regarding state schools for the deaf and blind, or any of the other subjects we will discuss today. We just want to learn about your experiences to inform our report.

This focus group is voluntary. You are free to leave at any time and to pass on any question you do not wish to answer. This focus group will take about an hour.

Would it be alright if I record our discussions for note-taking purposes? No one else will hear the recording. If at any point anyone would like me to turn the recorder off, just let me know.

We would really like to hear from each of you. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in all of your opinions and feelings. We only ask that one person speak at a time during the discussion. If at any time you would like clarification about any of the questions I’m asking, please feel free to interrupt me.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Background

1. How long have you been teaching B/VI or D/HH students?
2. How long have you been teaching at KSB/KSD?
3. Have you ever taught elsewhere? If yes, where and for how long?

Placement

4. For what type of students is KSB/KSD a particularly appropriate placement?

5. Are there some students for whom this is a less appropriate placement? If yes, what types of schools and what other types of alternative services would be better for them?

Appropriateness and Quality of Services and Education

6. Please describe the quality and appropriateness of what is currently in place for B/VI or D/HH students in Kentucky? We are not referring only to the state schools, but the broad spectrum of services that are available (e.g. state schools, regional, local).
7. What works particularly well under the current system?
8. What could be improved upon? What specific recommendations do you have on how to improve B/VI or D/HH education in Kentucky?
9. What should B/VI or D/HH students be able to do and to know by the time they leave school? By what criteria do we define educational success for a B/VI or D/HH student? What needs to be done to achieve this? How are these outcomes best measured?
10. Are there ways in which the state could substantially improve educational services for B/VI and D/HH students without substantially increasing costs?
11. How should educational services for B/VI and D/HH students evolve in Kentucky over the next five to ten years? What does the state need to do *now* to get there?

Outcomes and Core Curriculum

12. What are the expectations for students at KSB/KSD?
 - a. To what standards do you hold your students?
 - b. Is it realistic to hold KSB/KSD students to the same standards as those applied to students in other schools? Why or why not?
 - c. How do you define and measure 'success' for your students? (academically and post-secondary)
 - d. Judging from your experience, how are B/VI or D/HH students doing? To what factors do you contribute students' achievement or lack of it?
13. Are students participating in statewide assessments? Is it realistic?
14. How is the core curriculum aligned with special needs instruction for the students? What have been the difficulties of addressing both the core curriculum and special needs?

Conclusion

15. What things –if any – would you like to see changed at KSB/KSD, or in regards to B/VI or D/HH instruction in Kentucky?
16. What is your vision for the future of B/VI or D/HH education in Kentucky?
 - c) Anything substantially different than what is currently in place? If yes, what?
 - d) Specifically, how do you think the state can best educate its B/VI or D/HH students?
17. Is there anything else regarding KSD/KSB or B/VI or D/HH education in Kentucky that you think we should know?
18. If your own child were B/VI or D/HH, would you want them to attend KSD or KSB? If yes, why, and under what conditions? If no, why not?

ADDRESS IF THERE IS TIME:

Administration

19. Is the school administration responsive to the needs of the teachers and students? In what ways yes, and in what ways not?

Professional Development

20. What is your opinion of the teacher training programs in the area of B/VI or D/HH education? Appropriate? Strengths/weaknesses? Suggestions?

Post-secondary Transition (reflection of expectations)

21. How well do you believe KSD/KSB students are prepared for the post-secondary transition?

22. What vocational options are available? What higher education options are encouraged?

Integration Program

23. To what extent does integration into local schools take place for students at KSB/KSD?
Strengths/weaknesses?



AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

January 10, 2002

Dear parent or guardian:

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) has been contracted by the Kentucky Department of Education to conduct a study of the Kentucky Schools for the Deaf and Blind. As important part of this study, we are visiting KSD and KSB and will conduct a student focus group session at each school.

The purpose of this letter is to *ask for your permission to involve your child in the focus group*. The purpose of the focus group is to learn about students' experiences at KSD and KSB. All information will be kept confidential, and your child's last name will not be recorded. All information will be used only by AIR for this study.

This interview will last for about an hour. *We will try not to disturb your child's class schedule*. The information will be very useful to our report on the schools for the deaf and blind.

We hope you will allow your child to talk with us. If you have any questions about this, please contact Dr. Bartley at KSB, or Cassandra Chaney of the American Institutes for Research (kchaney@air.org; 650.843.8219). *If you agree to allow your child to participate in this focus group, please sign and return the next page of this letter to Dr. Bartley by **Wednesday, January 23, 2002**.*

Thank you for allowing your child to participate in this very important study.

Sincerely,

Tom Parrish, Ed.D
Project Director,
Evaluation of the Kentucky Schools for the Deaf and Blind



AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

Please return this page to Dr. Bartley by Wednesday, January 23, 2002

Please check one of the following boxes and sign below:

- ☐ Yes, I will allow my child to be interviewed for this study on Kentucky Schools for the Deaf and Blind. I understand that participation is entirely voluntary, and all names and information will be kept strictly confidential.
- ☐ No, I will not allow my child to be interviewed.

Print Your Name Relationship to Student Your Child's First Name and Grade

Parent/Guardian Signature Date



AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

January 10, 2002

Dear parent or guardian:

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) has been contracted by the Kentucky Department of Education to conduct a study of the Kentucky Schools for the Deaf and Blind. As important part of this study, we are visiting KSD and KSB and will conduct a student focus group session at each school.

The purpose of this letter is to *ask for your permission to involve your child in the focus group*. The purpose of the focus group is to learn about students' experiences at KSD and KSB. All information will be kept confidential, and your child's last name will not be recorded. All information will be used only by AIR for this study.

This interview will last for about an hour. *We will try not to disturb your child's class schedule*. The information will be very useful to our report on the schools for the deaf and blind.

We hope you will allow your child to talk with us. If you have any questions about this, please contact Superintendent Vivian Link at KSD, or Kassandra Chaney of the American Institutes for Research (kchaney@air.org; 650.843.8219). *If you agree to allow your child to participate in this focus group, please sign and return the next page of this letter to KSD by **Tuesday, January 22, 2002**.*

Thank you for allowing your child to participate in this very important study.

Sincerely,

Tom Parrish, Ed.D
Project Director,
Evaluation of the Kentucky Schools for the Deaf and Blind



AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

Please return this page to Vivian Link at KSD by Tuesday, January 22, 2002

Please check one of the following boxes and sign below:

- ☐ Yes, I will allow my child to be interviewed for this study on Kentucky Schools for the Deaf and Blind. I understand that participation is entirely voluntary, and all names and information will be kept strictly confidential.
- ☐ No, I will not allow my child to be interviewed.

Print Your Name Relationship to Student Your Child's First Name and Grade

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

KSB/KSD Student Focus Group Protocol

School: _____
Number of Respondents: _____
Grade levels of Respondents: _____
Facilitators: _____
Date: _____

Hi. Thanks for meeting with us. Our names are Tom, Jen, and Kassie. We're from a company called the American Institutes for Research. We are doing a study of the schools for the deaf and blind in Kentucky. As part of this study, we would like to know about your experiences and how you feel about your school. We'd like to ask you a few questions. If you don't want to talk with us, you can leave at any time, okay? Also, if you don't want to answer a certain question, just tell me that you don't want to answer it.

We would really like to hear from each of you. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in all of your opinions and feelings. We only ask that one person speak (or sign) at a time during the discussion. If you don't understand any of the questions I'm asking, please feel free to interrupt me.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

General Background

1. Where are you from, and how far is it from here?
2. How many years have you been at this school?
3. What other schools have you attended and for how long?

Distance from home/Commute

4. How do you feel about living away from home? Would you like to attend a school back home? Why/why not?
5. How long are your bus rides to and from school?
6. What do you think about the bus rides?

Appropriateness of Services

7. Do you think this school is providing you with the services you need?
8. Do you think this school is teaching what you need to learn?
9. What are the kinds of things you are learning that you think are most important for your future?
10. Are there other things you think you should be learning, but are not being taught at this school? If yes, can you tell me what those things are?

Quality of Services

11. Do you think you are receiving a good education here? In what ways yes, and in what ways no?
12. If you have attended other schools, in what ways is the education you are receiving here better? In what ways is it not as good?
13. What do you like most about going to school here?
14. What do you like least?
15. What suggestions do you have for improving the education you receive here?

Inclusion/School differences

16. Have you attended classes with hearing/sighted students? Tell me about these classes. If you needed special help, did you get it?
17. What type of school would you rather attend- one like KSD/KSB, or one with both hearing/sighted and B/VI or D/HH students? Why?
18. Do you think this school is the best place for you to learn? Why or why not?

Future/Expectations

19. What do you want to do when you graduate from KSD/KSB? What kind of guidance are you getting from the teachers/school about your future? *Who* is giving you guidance? Do you think going to this school will help you succeed in life? How so? What advantages or disadvantages in preparing you for the future do you think there are with this school as compared to other schools you might attend?

Residential Experiences

20. What do you like most and dislike most about living at KSD/KSB?
21. What things would you like changed about living at KSD/KSB?

Conclusion

22. Is there any else regarding this school or your education that you think we should know?

KSB Town Meeting Protocol

Thank you for coming to meet with us tonight. Our names are Tom Parrish (Project Director), Jenifer Harr (Associate Project Director), and Cassandra Chaney (Research Associate). We work for the American Institutes for Research in Palo Alto, CA. Our organization has been hired by the Kentucky Department of Education to conduct a study on the state schools for the deaf and blind. We will be looking at various data and information to determine what needs to be done to help B/VI and D/HH students at KSB and KSD reach academic proficiency. We will be giving a presentation about our organization and the study itself, after which we'll answer any questions regarding the study approach. The purpose of this Town Meeting is to get feedback from the community about blind and visual impairment education issues in Kentucky. After the presentation, we would like to pose some questions to the group about your perspectives.

We are interested in all of your opinions and feelings. We only ask that one person speak at a time during the discussion. If we are unable to get to everyone, we will provide contact information for you to reach us.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

- Power Point presentation (30 minutes)

Note: After the Power Point presentation, we will address any particular questions or comments that they may have pertaining to the study approach itself before directing questions to them.

1. We'd like you to describe the quality and appropriateness of what is currently in place for B/VI students in Kentucky? We are not referring only to the state schools, but the broad spectrum of services that are available (e.g. state schools, regional, local).
2. What works particularly well under the current system?
3. What could be improved upon? What specific recommendations do you have on how to improve B/VI education in Kentucky?
4. How can we make better use of the facilities and services available?
5. What should B/VI students be able to do and to know by the time they leave school? By what criteria do we define success for a B/VI student at every school? What needs to be done to achieve this? How are these outcomes best measured?
6. What educational outcomes should be emphasized for B/VI students and, what might be done by the schools to improve them?
7. Are there ways in which the state could substantially improve educational services for B/VI students without substantially increasing costs?
8. How should the educational services for B/VI students evolve in Kentucky over the next five to ten years? What does the state need to do *now* to get there?
9. Is there anything else regarding KSB or B/VI education in Kentucky that you think we should know?

KSD Town Meeting Protocol

Thank you for coming to meet with us tonight. Our names are Tom Parrish (Project Director), Jenifer Harr (Associate Project Director), and Cassandra Chaney (Research Associate). We work for the American Institutes for Research in Palo Alto, CA. Our organization has been hired by the Kentucky Department of Education to conduct a study on the state schools for the deaf and blind. We will be looking at various data and information to determine what needs to be done to help B/VI and D/HH students at KSB and KSD reach academic proficiency. We will be giving a presentation about our organization and the study itself, after which we'll answer any questions regarding the study approach. The purpose of this Town Meeting is to get feedback from the community about deaf/hard of hearing education issues in Kentucky. After the presentation, we would like to pose some questions to the group about your perspectives.

We are interested in all of your opinions and feelings. We only ask that one person speak (or sign) at a time during the discussion. If we are unable to get to everyone, we will provide contact information for you to reach us.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

- Power Point presentation (30 minutes)

Note: After the Power Point presentation, we will address any particular questions or comments that they may have pertaining to the study approach itself before directing questions to them.

1. We'd like you to describe the quality and appropriateness of what is currently in place for D/HH students in Kentucky? We are not referring only to the state schools, but the broad spectrum of services that are available (e.g. state schools, regional, local).
2. What works particularly well under the current system?
3. What could be improved upon? What specific recommendations do you have on how to improve D/HH education in Kentucky?
4. How can we make better use of the facilities and services available?
5. What should D/HH students be able to do and to know by the time they leave school? By what criteria do we define success for a D/HH student at every school? What needs to be done to achieve this? How are these outcomes best measured?
6. What educational outcomes should be emphasized for D/HH students and, what might be done by the schools to improve them?
7. Are there ways in which the state could substantially improve educational services for D/HH students without substantially increasing costs?
8. How should educational services for D/HH students evolve in Kentucky over the next five to ten years? What does the state need to do *now* to get there?
9. Is there anything else regarding KSD or D/HH education in Kentucky that you think we should know?

Appendix E:

Summary of Interviews with:

- ◆ District Directors of Special Education
- ◆ District Level B/VI and D/HH Teachers
- ◆ Parents of KSB Students
- ◆ Parents of KSD Students
- ◆ Parents of Public School B/VI and D/HH Students
- ◆ Students and Graduates of KSB and KSD

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL EDUCATION DIRECTORS SAMPLE OF 25; 18 INTERVIEWED

Summary includes 18 interviews with Special Education Directors (SED), or their representatives in the specialties of education of D/HH students or B/VI students. The break out by region is as follows:

Region 1 – 3 interviews

Region 2 – 1 interview

Region 3 – 1 interview (Jefferson Co is the only county in Region 3)

Region 4 – 5 interviews

Region 5 – 3 interviews (includes Boyle Co. where KSD is located)

Region 6 – 4 interviews

Region 7 – 1 interview

Region 8 – 0 interviews

From the Special Education Directors, there is a sense of a broad range of services available in local districts throughout the state, mostly dependent upon what region that are located in. It is clear that everyone is desperate for more certified teachers, particularly in special services such as O&M and interpretation, and in specific regions (e.g. severe lack of B/VI teachers in Western Kentucky). The state recently passed a law that interpreters must be certified by 2003, and all districts are scrambling to be in compliance but worried about finding the staff. Many directors noted that parents were very influential in the placement decision, though most parents want their children in the home district. There is very little mentioned about early intervention, family involvement, or extended time because Special Education Directors were mostly asked about placement options, local resources, relationships with KSB/KSD, and visions of the future for educating the blind and visually impaired and deaf and hard of hearing.

Special Education Directors point out that there is very little in the way of regional services available in many areas of the state. Those who have access to a regional program, appreciate it greatly. Those who do not would like to see more programs/services in their area. Some districts have formed cooperatives in order to maximize resources. Most SED's receive materials and support from the two schools, particularly in the form of evaluation services and participation on ARC decisions.

There seems to be some concern about both the academic content and supervision of residential students at the state schools. Most SED's noted that a disadvantage for students being at the state school was the distance from home, and lack of interaction with family and home community, while advantages included social interactions, cultural support, and adult living skills.

I. Early Identification and Intervention

SED_4 mentioned a preschool agency that they use, the Lexington Hearing & Speech Center, which serves infants to 5 years old.

II. Family involvement

SED_14 noted that the biggest problem they have with parents of B/VI and D/HH children is getting cooperation to make sure issues are followed up regularly with doctors (i.e. audiological tests).

III. Regionalization

SED_1 indicated that there were no regional programs available in her area. She would like to see more regional programs so that children could return home daily.

SED_2 noted that the regional programs are far from their county, and that this limits their intent to access the programs. The state schools are much easier to access for them, but he would like to see regional programs closer to his district so they can receive more outreach services.

SED_3 noted that she uses the KSD regional program (only for pre-K-2) because it has better resources than the school district. She mentioned some concern that the regional program seems to make requests for expensive equipment (i.e. auditory trainer system costs \$1500-3000/each).

SED_4 stated that they do not have any regional programs, and that KSD is closer for them for services.

SED_5 noted that their work with the KSD regional program is working well, but it is expensive. She mentioned that KSD provides good training & workshops for both teachers and parents. From KSB, their county receives materials and large print books. KSB also provides functional media assessments, and does classroom observations, as well as offer professional development for teachers.

SED_6 is not aware of any regional programs in her area.

SED_7 noted that they do not have regional programs in their area, and that KSD/KSB are the only choices, though they are about 150-200 miles away. The district uses outreach services very sporadically.

SED_8 said that KSD put a satellite preschool program in their district, as requested. There is not currently any regional program with KSB.

SED_11 feels that, as for the regional programs, the state schools really want the students to come to them. What the district really wants is for their D/HH teachers to come into the schools and observe, and help the regular teachers make sure the kids are getting what they need.

SED_16 said that they do have a regional program in the area, but that he was not sure how many local students attend it. He noted that O&M services are really difficult to access, and that they often go through the Foundation for the Blind or Cincinnati Foundation for the Blind.

IV. KSD and KSB as Statewide Resources

SED_1 noted that they work with KSB to obtain large print materials, and have worked with KSD with their most severely D/HH students.

SED_2 stated that the schools provide professional development for B/VI and D/HH teachers. They also send representatives to the ARC meetings, and help in accessing parents to complete required forms and signatures.

SED_3 stated that they have not used services from KSD, but they have a B/VI itinerant person who contacts KSB for questions, issues, and receives support by phone. She also noted that this is where the state has the biggest role, by organizing the schools, and overseeing them, just as they do with any other education agency.

SED_4 commented that she felt that KSD/KSB should provide support for districts in program planning, and promotion of literacy. For districts that have more resources, the schools should be able to provide program enhancement and serve as resource centers by preparing staff to provide services.

SED_6 noted that they receive support such as consultations, equipment, large print & Braille materials, and participation in ARC meetings from KSB.

SED_10 said that for B/VI, KSB has been very supportive providing summer training, etc. For D/HH though, they felt that there was a lack in their area of training and availability for sign language lessons for parents, teachers, and staff. They did mention using both schools for evaluation services that were very useful.

SED_11 said that some students participate in the KSB inter-session programs, and the district provides transportation for them.

SED_12 relies on the state schools for evaluation services.

SED_13 noted that their district is part of a 12-district coop that plans institutes for professional development, and that KSD/KSB participate in those institutes.

SED_14 mentioned that they had recently had a child evaluated by the Cincinnati School for the Blind for visual aids. She also noted using KSB for functional evaluations of students.

SED_17 noted that she would like to have more professional development and more training for parents, so that there can be more connections between home and school.

V. Defining Criteria and Context

SED_1 noted that they look at the needs of the child and what each setting has to offer. The ARC and the parents reach a consensus for each decision.

SED_2 stated that they do not consider regional programs for placement, and when decisions about KSD/KSB versus local schools are to be made, they usually listen to the parent recommendation. He contends that more often than not, the district can serve most children, but the specific needs of the child take precedence.

SED_3 noted that each case is analyzed and then decisions are made based on the child's need and parental choice. She mentioned that there are no set criteria determining specific circumstances under which different placements should occur.

SED_4 said that the IEP process was lengthy for D/HH students. The IEP is developed based on information they have on the child (assessment scores, communication issues, etc), and then they determine where it can be implemented, hoping for placement in the home district first.

SED_5 said that in their district, parental choice carried a lot of weight on determining placement.

SED_6 stated that they look at the provision of services and parental input.

SED_7 stated that it depends on the services available locally in the district, and make decisions based on the availability of staff and resources.

SED_8 said that they have one student at KSB and that this was “totally a family decision”. The student has a degenerative vision loss, and the district could not continue to meet the students needs. There is no B/VI teacher available in their area (western KY), and no one to teach Braille.

SED_10 stated that for D/HH children, it was largely a parent decision. For B/VI children though, they felt that KSB was “usually the last placement looked at.” They want to try to serve those needs in the district.

SED_11 said that while they only had one student at KSD, that student was there because his parents wanted him to be there. It became a philosophical decision rather than one based on lack of resources available.

SED_12 noted that they consider the severity of the disability, the age, and what the needs are in order to be prepared to be fully functioning adults.

SED_13 stated that it is pretty much up to the parent – if the parent wants the child to go to a residential school. (This district has only had 1 student in the last 8 years at KSB).

SED_16 said that decision is based on the level of need, and that they take into account what the parent and child wants.

SED_17 stated that they had to consider available resources before placement – there is a lack of sign interpreters and instructors who know ASL in her area.

SED_18 said that parents make often decisions, as they have moved into the district to be closer to the state school.

VI. Children with Complex Needs

SED_1 commented that she would like to see the state schools be more receptive about serving multiply disabled students, versus only D/HH and B/VI students.

SED_6 stated that “state schools will not accept students with multiple disabilities and in those instances the state schools have the final say.”

SED_9 stated that when children have additional disabilities, the district serves them better because of the combination of trained people. She noted that KSB was sued over denying a student with multiple disabilities, but they are starting to serve more students with complex needs.

VII. Service Provider Shortage for B/VI & D/HH Students

SED_1 commented that she would like to have more training for her staff, and more specialized staff. She indicated that this has been one of the worst years in finding trained personnel. She suggested that incentives might be offered to those in the field of learning & behavioral disorders (e.g. tuition).

SED_2 noted that for O&M, they contract with a specialist to do assessments, and the district teacher for B/VI then implements recommendations. He feels very fortunate to have a B/VI teacher since many of the surrounding counties do not. They just employed a teacher for D/HH. He noted that they also share some resources with surrounding counties because of the limitations in finding certified people.

SED_3 commented that the number one issue for them is the lack of personnel, such as O&M, OT, PT, SLP and special ed teachers that are trained to deal with multiply handicapped students. She feels that salary is a big issue, and that the complications in the certification process are an obstacle. For their district, which is on the Ohio border, the lack of personnel is further complicated by the fact that teachers can get paid \$12k more in Ohio.

SED_4 noted that all their teachers of B/VI and d/HH students are certified, and several of the interpreters are in the process of certification.

SED_6 noted that there is a shortage of certified personnel – she has one certified teacher of D/HH, one fulltime interpreter, and one part time interpreter. They are having a lot of trouble finding certified teachers of B/VI in her co-op of 10 districts.

SED_7 stated that she would like to see the state provide incentives for teachers to go back to school for their master's particularly in these specialty areas. Another issue for her district is the pay scale for interpreters – they currently make \$25/hour, in comparison to a 2nd year teacher without a college degree who makes \$19/hour.

SED_8 said that their district has had a lot of problems recruiting teachers in Western KY, particularly for B/VI students. They currently contract for O&M services from a person who is 70 miles away. Materials are not an issue, just trained personnel.

SED_9 noted that while they do not have too many issues with finding certified personnel at the moment, they do foresee this as an issue because of retirement of longtime teachers, and salary setting that only recognizes the first 10 years of teaching experience.

SED_10 said that she had a difficult time finding certified interpreters, and that O&M services are provided by someone from another county with a contract.

SED_11 reiterated that they could not locate trained, certified personnel in Western KY.

SED_13 noted a lot of resentment towards people who are receiving scholarships for certification education, and then choosing not to go into education of B/VI or D/HH. She feels that people who get money from the state to go for certification should be obligated to serve as an educator in that field (rather than a “high paid consultant”).

SED_16 said that it was difficult to recruit teachers because of pay scale right across the border (in Ohio – salary scale is more there, as noted earlier).

VIII. Investment in Technology and Vocational Training Programs

SED_2 stated that they invest a great deal of resources into assistive technology devices and have created a library of those devices so they know what they have on hand. He mentioned FM systems, zoom tech computers, software to accommodate & modify materials, and monocular and visual tools. They also have a computer lab for children with disabilities.

SED_5 noted that they had purchased amplification devices, ear molds for hearing aides, sign language software, and resource books for D/HH students.

SED_7 stated that she would like more assistive technology which she knows is available, but hard to locate for each special need when there are so many with special needs.

SED_10 noted that their technology people are not familiar with most of the specialized equipment (such as special computers and Braille printers), so she has to go back and continually refresh herself on how to work them.

SED_11 said that they buy a lot of assistive technology, but what they really need are experts in the field as service providers.

SED_12 noted that their district has purchased light boxes, tactile equipment, text readers, enlargement machines, Intellitalk for B/VI students. For D/HH students they have purchased such things as a phonic ear.

SED_15 said that they have purchased a device called the “eye communicator” for D/HH students, which is a program that takes the teacher’s verbal notes and translates it into text in real time. (cost is \$6000, demonstrator machine was \$1500)

IX. Extended Time

No SED’s commented on the issue of extended time. This was not a specific question that was asked of them.

A. Other Issues/Notes

SED_2 wondered why the state wants the district to generate number for B/VI students separately from their overall child counts, and why the state does not ask for D/HH student data disaggregated. He also noted that at the district level it is very expensive to provide the necessary accommodations in the regular educational setting. He would like to see the state provide help in implementing these programs and in regular environments so that regular education teachers can serve B/VI and D/HH students. He noted that “often students are referred to more restrictive settings because of the potential cost involved in educating them in regular environments.”

SED_5 mentioned that if she sent one of her students to KSD, she would not have to pay tuition, but when she sends a student to the regional program, it is quite expensive. In addition the district has to purchase the equipment for the students in that program, and the transportation. The cost

ends up being about \$9000/student, and she feels that the state should fund a portion of these expenses.

SED_6 commented that she feels that KSD does not “abide by the same standards and are not held accountable for those [students] scores, and those scores are sent back to the local district who is rewarded or sanctioned according to those scores.”

SED_9 noted that they provide a full range of services for students including full and part time audiologists, speech therapists, OT’s, interpreters for all the kids who sign, TTY’s, and captioners for D/HH students. For B/VI students, there are 26 itinerant teachers in the district including O&M, 3 resource rooms, etc. She also pointed out that it is important to note the difference between education of B/VI and KSB education – they do part of it, but not all.

SED_14 said that their biggest problem is the issue of transportation – they were recently billed \$15K by a neighboring county with whom they have cooperative agreement for transportation of students to KSD.

B. Advantages/Disadvantages of State Schools vs. LEA’s

SED_1 noted that one advantage of the state school is the expertise of the staff, but that the disadvantage is the distance from the county – both are about 100 miles away. She also feels that it is a disadvantage to the student to not grow up in the local community.

SED_2 stated that he feels it is a disadvantage to educate children outside of the home setting, but an advantage is that the schools have experts that are more specifically trained than many of the county specialists. He also noted another advantage is the transition services at the school are more than the districts are able to do (into work or school).

SED_3 felt that the biggest advantage of KSD was the opportunity for D/HH students to get immersed in deaf culture. She did not feel that students receive a better education there, but that the social aspect plays an important role, particularly for D/HH students. She mentioned concern about the supervision of residential students, and concerns about the academic content – “they need to raise expectations and the quality of their curriculum.”

SED_4 noted concerns about the academic content at both KSD & KSB and claims they are not strong, and that students are not learning at the same level as local school students. They feel that for the most part, the schools are an advantage for older children who need to be there for socialization reasons.

SED_5 said that one disadvantage of the state schools is that students are not around “typical peers”.

SED_6 commented that one advantage of the state schools is having students participate in blind or deaf culture. She feels that state schools are more cost effective, and have access to more assistive technology. The advantage of the local schools is having students included in their home communities.

SED_7 felt that one advantage of local schools was that this kids have hometown friends, and that the district is trying to help them become “global learners”. She did note that one advantage of the state schools is that students can learn work skills that they might not learn at the local district.

SED_8 stated that the main advantage of the state school is the sense of community for the students, so they would not feel so isolated and would have people to socialize and communicate with. However, this is also a drawback, because both schools are at least 4 hours away.

SED_9 feels that KSD is an excellent resource for kids who sign. However, even though the mission statement indicates they are to serve all students, all communication methods, they do not. She also feels that they are academically far behind, though the elementary program is catching up. Another disadvantage noted is that the environment is “artificial” – it is tougher to go to regular schools, easier to go to the state schools. KSB was thought to provide good vision specific skills, though she felt they were less successful with the core content.

SED_10 said that the state schools can provide services such as sign language skills, deaf culture, O&M services, and daily living skills. However, they also feel that the expectations are not as high there.

SED_12 stated that she felt the disadvantage of the state schools is the distance from the home community, but that the advantage is that high school students receive a lot more additional offerings and opportunities to be with peers.

SED_16 also feels that the biggest disadvantage of the state school is the distance, being away from home and lack of everyday life. The advantage is the ability of the schools to be able to focus on specific needs, and provide culture for the students. He noted concerns about the residential programs, particularly about supervision.

C. Relationship Between Districts and the State Schools

SED_2 stated that his district has a very professional relationship with KSB/KSD, and that they are very open to providing support when it is requested.

SED_4 stated that they work closely with KSD to “keep close tabs on the students that go there.”

SED_5 mentioned that her only relationship with the schools is through the KSD regional program, where she has good communication via e-mail and telephone about the students in that program.

SED_6 stated that she is not happy with KSD services, and feels that students there regressed in their reading and academic progress. She said, “with a good conscience, [she] could not recommend students to go to KSD.” She feels that their solution to behavioral problems was to return students to their home districts, and that they do not see themselves as providing special education. The district has no problems collaborating with KSB.

SED_7 noted that her district has an open and cordial relationship with KSB/KSD. She also said that she feels that the staff at the state schools need to be more knowledgeable about school law, and gave an example of when she had to look up a rule in the KY Administrative Rules handbook for them.

SED_8 feels that their district has a very good relationship with KSB/KSD, “better than most in Western KY, because of the circumstances.” However, she also noted that she feels that the state schools need to start to see themselves as part of KY, as part of the special ed community in KY.

SED_9 stated that their relationship is pretty good, much better than 10 years ago.

SED_15 noted that they have a very open relationship with KSD, but made no mention of KSB.

SED_18 said that she feels like her district had a pretty good relationship with KSD, but that she feels like the administration there does not seem to operate under the same rules as every other district. She feels their evaluations are lacking for students, and what they give to parents is not thorough. She stated that her district “constantly fights with [KSD] about how to meet their students needs.” She also noted concern about the residential aspect at KSD, and lack of support in the dorms. With KSB, however, she noted that they did a wonderful job fostering one of her students there.

SUMMARY OF DISTRICT B/VI & D/HH TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Sample of 11 for B/VI (4 interviewed); Sample of 12 for D/HH (7 interviewed).

Summary includes 4 B/VI teachers and 7 D/HH teachers. The break out by region is as follows:

Region 1 – 2 D/HH, 2 B/VI interview

Region 2 – 1 D/HH interview

Region 3 – 1 D/HH interview (Jefferson Co is the only county in Region 3 and is the region in which KSB is located)

Region 4 – 1 D/HH, 1 B/VI interview

Region 5 – 0 interviews (includes Boyle Co. where KSD is located)

Region 6 – 0 interviews

Region 7 – 1 B/VI interview

Region 8 – 2 D/HH interviews

From the teachers, there is the view that KSB and KSD serve them as statewide resources, but they would like more support and they would like that support provided to them in their regions. Teachers support the idea of regionalization, but view it in terms of services from KSD and KSB coming to them, not them going to Louisville or Danville. Teachers recognize the importance of intervention, especially for D/HH children, but B/VI teachers also believe that early intervention is important for B/VI children. Teachers are very conscious of the statewide service provider shortage and believe that the state could do more to offer incentives to attract service providers to more isolated regions of the state. B/VI teachers in particular report having large caseloads, and itinerant teachers describe themselves as “stretched thin.” B/VI teachers appear to have a closer, more positive relationship with KSB than D/HH teachers do with KSD. Two of the D/HH teachers report having negative attitudes about the quality of KSD’s educational program based upon students they have received from the school.

I. Early Intervention

D/HH_1 and D/HH_5 believe that early intervention services are poor and that First Steps is shallow in terms of depth and quality of services. They would like to see First Steps do more for D/HH children.

D/HH_1 would like to see more outreach services for parents from KSD, and would like to see better early intervention services for both children and their parents to educate parents about how to help their children develop communication skills.

B/VI_1 believes early childhood services for B/VI students are currently good but would like to see more early Braille training before the children enter kindergarten.

II. Family Involvement

D/HH_6 reports parents are not always as involved with their children’s education as they could be, especially hearing parents of D/HH students in which parents are not learning sign and are not obviously communicating with their child at home.

B/VI_3 believes that home environment (and student attitude) are more important determiners of student success than placement. This teacher used to be opposed to residential schools, but now sees them as helping some students, regardless of degree of disability. This teacher has students who are not totally blind who are failing with every adaptation and accommodation, and totally blind students who are succeeding in the regular schools. He attributes this to student attitude and home environment.

III. Regionalization

D/HH_6 is based in Region 4, where KSD's regional program is located, but is unfamiliar with services available there for D/HH students.

D/HH_2 would like to see more KSD regional programs that allowed students to attend those KSD regional schools as day students.

D/HH_4 would like to see more collaboration among districts and counties to provide greater cost effectiveness for D/HH services.

IV. KSB and KSD as statewide resources

D/HH_1 has used KSD as a statewide resource and views it as a valued resource for her as a D/HH teacher, but would like more support from KSD.

D/HH_5 reports problems with the KDE not getting back to her in a timely fashion with information she needs for her students.

D/HH_4 sees KSD as a statewide resource, especially for evaluations, but the distance between Danville and her district is great and so often students are evaluated by the local district, which the teacher believes is inadequate.

B/VI_2 reports receiving good support from KSB in terms of materials and professional development opportunities.

B/VI_4 would like to have more support from KSB, especially in the area of assessment and evaluation.

V. Defining Criteria and Context

D/HH_1 has a student whom she believes would be better served at KSD but the parents do not want the child to be placed there.

D/HH_2 has a student with minor hearing loss who has just transferred to KSD, primarily because of parental wishes. She notes that the student has flourished there because of the social aspects of KSD.

D/HH_3 reports that parental preference plays a strong role in determining placement. B/VI_1 reports that parental preference strongly influences placement. This teacher has a student she thinks would be better served at KSB, but parents do not want child to go.

D/HH_2, D/HH_6 both report that their D/HH students who sign are often isolated and only communicate with their interpreters, not other students or staff at their schools. This impacts their language development.

D/HH_1, D/HH_3, D/HH_5 consider KSD to be a poor academic environment, but a rich social environment for D/HH students. But D/HH_5 views KSD to not be the “real world.”

D/HH_4 would like KSD to provide more support, resources to counties, districts, and be more tolerant of different ways of providing D/HH education. D/HH_4 comments: “Residential schools think their way is the best,” and reports that KSD tends to interact with her county as if the county’s approach to D/HH education is automatically wrong.

B/VI_1 considers KSB to provide excellent and well varied services for B/VI students.

B/VI_3 reports that KSB sometimes rejects students that the school does not believe have vision as their primary disability. This teacher perceives placement decisions to be up to KSB, not the ARC.

VI. Children with Complex Needs

B/VI_4 has MD students she thinks would be better served at KSB, but doesn’t consider the school well prepared to serve MD students.

B/VI_3 believes KSB is not well equipped for dealing with MD students or other students who are not capable of being independent.

VII. Service Provider Shortage for B/VI & D/HH Students

D/HH_2 is itinerant and covers a large geographic area; she spends a lot of time driving versus teaching, but the district believes that the D/HH numbers are too low to justify hiring another itinerant teacher.

D/HH_5 reports that only 2 of the 5 interpreters in her district are certified and she ends up doing much of the interpreting for her students because the other interpreters are not qualified.

D/HH_5 complains that other staff, especially speech therapists and school psychologists, in her district are inexperienced with D/HH students, and in some instances, are unwilling to work with these children. “Our speech pathologist people run and scream, they don’t want to deal with deaf kids, they can’t test them. They (speech staff) treat them (D/HH students) like the plague.”

D/HH_4 argues that other KY universities should be able to offer the D/HH certification as well as help address the interpreter shortage. Also believes that the state needs to amend its law requiring that all interpreters be certified by 2003; even with uncertified interpreters there are not enough to meet the current demand, and the law is artificially exacerbating the shortage.

B/VI_3 complains that there is no requirement that a B/VI student be served by a B/VI teacher. This requirement exists only for Braille reading B/VI students, but for not other B/VI

students. So there is the problem of non-trained, other special education service providers teaching B/VI students.

B/VI_3 argues that one reason there is a shortage of B/VI teachers and O&M specialists is that districts offer low paying positions and don't actively recruit in the areas or manner they should.

B/VI_4 argues that if districts offered more incentives, they could better recruit B/VI and O&M staff to their areas.

B/VI_1 advocates for both more instructors and better distribution of those instructors to address the serious shortage of O&M services in many regions, especially in Western KY. Shortage worse than B/VI teacher shortage.

B/VI_2 notes University of Louisville's new focus on Western KY to address the B/VI/O&M shortage in that area.

D/HH_3 views Eastern Kentucky University's D/HH teacher preparation program as mediocre and not preparing strong D/HH teachers.

VIII. Investment in technology and vocational training programs

Teachers were not asked about technology or vocational training programs.

IX. Extended Time

Teachers were not asked about this, none commented about extended time.

A. Other issues/notes

D/HH_2, D/HH_3 view state assessments, e.g., CATS, as unfair for their students. B/VI_2 says most of her students are not participating in statewide assessments due to their disabilities. B/VI_3 sees assessments as helpful, but in some cases, not really assessing what children should and need to know to be independent. This teacher also objects to how general education standards are now driving education, assessment for B/VI students.

D/HH_2, D/HH_4 would like more opportunities for networking, professional development. Complain of being geographically and professionally isolated; most services, training; most teacher professional development opportunities are often several hours away by car.

B/VI_3 argues that other teachers and special education service providers need to be informed about the role and responsibility of the B/VI teacher; B/VI teachers are not responsible for teaching content, and some districts want them to.

D/HH_5 believes educational services for D/HH students in KY haven't changed much at all since she started teaching 22 years ago.

B/VI_3 concerned about the poor quality of Braille instruction of recent University of Louisville B/VI teacher preparation program graduates.

B/VI_1 thinks UL has a good B/VI program, but did not cover technology thoroughly enough.

B/VI_1 argues state should have better accountability policies for B/VI teacher candidates who are receiving state support for their credentials and then do not go into teaching. B/VI teacher training should not be a “free masters.”

B/VI_4 notes the need for more education within the B/VI education training program on multiple disabilities; when she entered the field 20 years ago there was no orientation to MD within B/VI education.

B/VI_4 recommends that district or county lines not apply to itinerants, that service area should be based on a certain mile radius, not number of counties. This would make for more efficient use of the teacher and less driving for the teacher.

**SUMMARY OF KSB PARENTS
SHORT-COURSE AND CENTER BASED (DAY AND RESIDENTIAL)**

**TOTAL SAMPLE OF 30; 15 INTERVIEWED
(13 INTERVIEWED FROM SAMPLE; 2 SELF-SELECTED)**

This section includes the interview summaries of 13 sampled parents (of four residential, two day, and seven short course students) and 2 self-selected parents (of one day and one residential student).

Overall, parents made positive comments about their children's education at KSB. In particular, they were very satisfied with their children's attainment of independence skills, as well as their involvement in positive social relationships. One parent, while still an advocate for inclusion, recognized that her child needs both settings since the relationships formed at KSB are important for the children's emotional health. One of the most significant advantages about the program at KSB is that it has the necessary resources and expertise to prepare VI students to function independently. KSB counts with specialized resources, technology, and qualified teachers, and is able to provide essential services such as Braille instruction. Often, public schools are ill equipped to cover special needs of VI students. Finally, whereas KSB has served as an advocate for the families, public schools do not always offer that degree of support.

With respect to the regional programs, one parent referred to the one serving her child as a "godsend." However, some KSB parents expressed their concern about resources being taken away from the school in order to develop regional programs. These parents want to see continued, and even increased, investment into KSB's center-based program.

In regards to the short-courses, one parent noted that they give her child a good "grounding" for the rest of the year. This child attends a short-course for 6 weeks at the beginning of the year and then returns to his local public school.

I. Early Identification and Intervention

KSB_12 said that she did not know about the availability of early intervention services. She said there should be a "better system" to find children with special needs and to bring them into the Early intervention programs.

KSB_4 referred to KSB as a "gatekeeper" for early intervention, and stated that as such, KSB needs to establish a "baseline of expectations" about what services need to be provided by programs throughout the state.

KSB_5 acknowledged the positive role that her child's doctor played by insisting in the provision of Braille and VI services after her 9-year-old child was diagnosed with a visual impairment. Initially, these parents did not follow the doctor's advice, but he continued to insist until the VI teacher took the initiative and contacted the parents. This parent established the important role that professionals can play when they are proactive in promoting the intervention and treatment, especially when parents do not understand the importance of these services.

KSB_7 said that her child started receiving services from VIPS twice a week when he was two years old. She referred to it as a "wonderful program." Later, when the child turned three, he went

to a Head Start program for two years. However, the public school did not have a VI specialist, so they contracted with VIPs to provide those services.

KSB_13 said that First Steps conducted a home visit and then referred them to VIPS, which provided early intervention services through home visits. According to this parent, VIPS became their “life support for a while.”

II. Family involvement

Communication is an essential ingredient to promote family involvement. Nearly all KSB parents indicated they had good communication with the school, particularly with the children’s primary teachers. Parents reported a variety of communication strategies utilized by KSB staff. For example, every week, teachers send home a folder containing tests and homework. Parents sign a sheet to indicate they received and reviewed the packet. Teachers and parents also communicate via e-mail, and a newsletter is sent through e-mail every Friday. Some parents are involved in the on-site council.

KSB_15 said that staff members ask for her opinion and that she feels they care about what she thinks. She feels included in the decisions made about her child’s education.

KSB_9 short-course parent commended the resource center for providing her with valuable information.

KSB_12 short course parent was impressed with KSB’s communication and support. She believes they have a good networking system. One parent contrasted the quality of communication experienced at KSB and at the public schools. In her opinion, the communication lines were not good in the public school, mostly because the teachers did not have an understanding of VI issues. She always had to advocate for her child’s needs. However, another parent (KSB_3) reported inappropriate communication, particularly regarding academic issues. She explained that her child was an honor student in math but scored very low on ACT math, and she did not know about this situation until the ACT scores came in.

KSB_3 said that it is necessary to educate parents about their child’s special needs and about the options available. She stated that it is difficult for parents to “grasp” the types of services and education needed by their children. In her own case, she still does not understand the services needed by her sixth grader. She concluded by saying that it is not sufficient to simply tell parents about their available options, but that it is also necessary to explain these options to them.

KSB_4 said that parental training is a key ingredient so that parents can become knowledgeable about what they can do support and teach their children.

KSB_5 short course parent does not have frequent communication with KSB, but has a good support from the district’s VI teacher.

KSB_12 said she received training to learn how to interact with her child, and to teach him how find objects. She also reported that during the elementary years, she was allowed to “hand-pick” her child’s teachers. She interviewed them to find out if they would be comfortable with her child as their student. She shared with the teachers her expectations and provided comments about the classroom environment. She gives the school as reasoning behind why things should be that way.

KSB_12 was a member of KSB's parent board, where they discussed issues about early intervention. Through this experience, she learned how to be an advocate.

KSB_13 reported that KSB informs parents about different ways in which they help at home. KSB initiates contact by calling her when the need arises. She reported that many of the parents whose children attend public schools have to work intensively with their children in order to help them to "get by" or to help them be successful."

KSB_5 was amazed at the services available for her child at KSB. She did not know that transportation to and from KSB would be covered.

KSB_7 said that although her child was diagnosed at age five, she did not know there was a school for the blind until he was in the sixth grade.

KSB_9 said that it is difficult to get services unless parents know who to call and what questions to ask. She also stated that often parents do not receive the necessary information from their local schools.

III. Regionalization

KSB_1 reported that when her child attended a local school, her child only received VI services only once a week, and that this was not enough.

KSB_2 said the public schools were not an option for her child since the district did not have an O&M instructor and the schools share an itinerant teacher. Previously, her child attended a public state school for the blind in another state and in her opinion that public schools "failed" them. She noted that the children that do not attend KSB must have access to a VI teacher. She would like to see the state "covered" with appropriate services.

KSB_4 said that her child attended a public school until 8th grade and received support from an itinerant teacher and an aide up until the fifth grade. From the sixth to the 8th grade, she received services from two B/VI teachers. However, she stated that the teachers did not understand and "the pressure became too much." She also noted that some children do not receive any medical or educational services.

KSB_5 said that her child attended a public school until the fifth grade and that throughout this time, he did not receive any services. There was no B/VI teacher available, and they had to rely on a special education teacher. She would prefer her child to attend a school in their home district so that he could be at their home every night. However, she said "the reality is that public schools do not have same caliber of services as KSB." She also noted that a neighboring county has good program, but she is not allowed to send child there because of they were not residents of the county.

KSB_6 short-course parent is satisfied with the services offered by the public school and said that although the county only has three B/VI students, they accommodate her child's needs. He receives pullout services from a B/VI teacher three times a week for Braille instruction. Cane (O&M) was supposed to be offered two times a month, but he is only receiving this class every five weeks. In her opinion, both the public school and KSB are good.

KSB_8 short course parent stated that her child does not attend KSB full-time because they receive good services in their home district and she wants him to be with “normal” children. He receives Braille instruction once a week and he has access to large print materials and various technology devices. He receives O&M services from KSB. She added that she is not ready for her child to go away.

KSB_9 has a fifth grade child who attends a KSB’s short course for two weeks. However, they pick her up daily since they are not comfortable with her staying overnight. The commute takes forty-five minutes each way. She does not want her child to attend KSB full time because it is too far away as to commute daily, and she is not ready to “let go” so that she can become a residential student. Although her child is the only B/VI student at the local school, she “manages well.” She receives services once a week from a B/VI teacher, who also serves as a consultant for her other teachers.

KSB_11 short course parent noted that she has explored the option of sending her child to KSB as a residential student. However, KSB does not agree and asserts that the technology is available for him at the public school. Nevertheless, she stated that the school has not purchased the necessary technological devices because they do not understand or believe her child’s problems. Reportedly, her child has a B/VI teacher, but the school does not provide other resources or support. For example, they do not have large print books. The mother added that the school has not provided transportation assistance to the summer program at KSB. The parent attempted to obtain assistance from the Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs, but they have not responded. Previously, CCSHCN and KSB provided her child with a computer.

KSB_12 stated that their biggest concern is the lack of certified teachers. Initially, after her child lost his sight, an O&M trainer provided services at the school two to three times a week. Currently, an itinerant B/VI teacher, who serves mostly as a consultant, works with her child. However, the mother would like her child to be served by a B/VI teacher on a frequent basis, at least twice a week. In addition, she would like KSB to provide “daily instructions” to the school’s staff through a satellite connection.

KSB_14 indicated that public school teachers were not as cooperative as B/VI teachers were. She attributes this to high enrollment rates, time constraints, and a lack of understanding about how his vision problems can affect his education.

KSB_15: The Principal of a local school recommended KSB since his school did not have appropriate facilities or services.

KSB_13 sent her child to KSB so that he could be in a smaller class and so that the teachers would reinforce what the therapists taught.

IV. KSD and KSB as Statewide Resources

KSB_2 does not want to see KSB closed, and said that the school funds should not be redirected from center-based services to outreach services. She said that parents still feel a great need for a center-based program.

KSB_3 wants the state to continue to sponsor KSB. She also expressed concern about the resources required to be a statewide resource.

KSB_4 said that KSB should serve as a resource for B/VI children across the state.

KSB_9 said that she became aware of the technology available for her child through the short-course program. KSB sent outreach staff to the child's school to talk to the teachers about effective practices, and to ensure that both KSD and the local school provided services in a consistent manner. She would like to see more outreach staff working with the school districts to ensure a better understanding of the need or availability of services, and to promote a better awareness of B/VI issues by regular educators.

V. Defining Criteria and Context

KSB_2 said that they live 20 miles away from the school, but her child is a resident student because the family cannot teach him everything that he is learning at KSB. She explained that he needs the residential context to truly experience independence. She noted that it is important to have a choice, and that placement should be the parents' decision along with the input from the local districts.

KSB_11 short course parent wants her child to attend KSB full-time. However, KSB does not agree and asserts that the technology is available for him at the public school. Nevertheless, this parent reports that her child is not receiving the necessary technology and services from the public school.

VI. Children with Complex Needs

KSB_3 said that currently KSB is not equipped to handle multiple disabilities.

X. Service Provider Shortage for B/VI & D/HH Students

KSB_2 said that last year her child's teacher at KSB was not certified. She would like to see a stronger teaching program at the University of Louisville.

KSB_3 cited a high teacher turnover at KSB. Furthermore, she stated that the school has to take staff regardless of their certification status because of the shortage. She also noted that teacher-child ratios can be misleading because one disruptive or complex-needs child can absorb a significant amount of the teacher's time.

KSB_4 said that the state needs more certified teachers, and more importantly, needs to place them where they are needed. There is a serious shortage of O&M teachers, and some regions do not have any providers.

KSB_5 remarked upon the need for qualified teachers, as well as the problem of establishing a teacher in an area that might not have a demand for her/him later.

VII. Investment in Technology and Vocational Training Programs

KSB_2 said that more technology is needed, and that staff and families need to know how to use it. She also added that "vocational training as gone downhill."

KSB_4 noted that since parents cannot afford the necessary technology, it is up to the schools to acquire it. She added that KSB should “keep up” with technology, since it is constantly changing and advancing.

KSB_4 suggested the creation of a transition program at the University of Louisville to allow KSB Seniors to attend courses and to stay at the university for a period before their graduation from high school.

KSB_10 said that there needs to be more investment in technology, and that it also needs to be available at the public schools and the community, not just at KSB.

KSB_7 noted that her child would have a higher probability of finding a job if he acquires advanced computer skills and if he has access to the appropriate technology.

KSB_14 parent said that the public schools’ curriculum should include more “vocational exploration” and life skills, such as learning to manage money, and to organize tasks and materials.

XI. Extended Time

KSB_2 would like an extended school day and more school years. She noted that the time to cover both the core content, as well as additional skills, is not enough. She would like to see more after-school opportunities. The parent was also concerned that things that her child is being pulled out for in the morning (e.g., music) should be offered after school. She explained that B/VI students need much more input than sighted students need, and that she does not want time taken away when it should be dedicated to the development of important skills. Furthermore, KSB_2 said that the education of B/VI students should not cease at the end of the school day, and that instead the day hours should be maximized by giving house parents appropriate training. In her opinion, the school day should focus on core curriculum and other skills, while house parents emphasize living skills.

KSB_4 said that KSB dorms need an educational focus so that the skills learned during the school day can be reinforced during those hours. She would like to more learning opportunities provided through longer days. She agrees that B/VI Students can have high achievement levels, but they sometimes need longer time than the regular students do.

A. Other issues/notes

Independent Living Skills:

Parents noted that it is important to teach B/VI Children how to be independent and how to function in the real world. They said that KSB should remain positive, but still emphasize that the real world is more difficult. KSB_3 said that she is not pleased with her child’s academic performance, but she credited KSB for helping her child be independent and for the additional skills that he has attained at the school, such as orientation and mobility, independent living skills, and athletics. Community Based Education was a common theme mentioned as an essential element by all parents. KSB_5 applauded the Community Based Education provided at KSB. According to KSB_7, self-advocacy and to KSB_8, self-esteem are fundamental in promoting independence. In their opinion, KSB has helped their children to attain all these elements.

Expanded core curriculum:

An expanded core curriculum is the avenue towards independence. To be successful, students need to learn the academic subjects along with the skills necessary to be successful as a visually impaired and blind person. For example, orientation and mobility, independent living skills, assistive and adaptive technology, and Community Based Education are some of the elements mentioned by parents to include in a comprehensive curriculum.

B. Additional needs mentioned by KSB Parents:

Local schools do not have the money or the means to provide services. More investment is needed to allow for better resources and technology, as well as to hire specialized personnel to work with the children at the local schools.

KSB_14 said that since the world is vision-oriented, mainstreaming should be emphasized.

KSB_15 believes that public schools will need to include B/VI students in a meaningful way if they are to serve them. In particular, she noted the relevance of educating other students about disabled students and how to appropriately interact with them. She also noted that regular teachers have to be prepared to work with students who have special needs.

KSB_14 said that the state should ensure the availability of the necessary resources for B/VI students attending schools located in small, rural regions.

In general, parents said there is a need for more summer programs. They suggested that there should be more opportunities available at the public schools so that visually impaired students can socialize with their peers outside of the school context.

Two parents said that KSB should monitor kids' academic progress more closely, particularly for those students who are college-bound. There should be more guidance counseling and an increased focus on higher education.

KSB_4 said that there should be more sharing and networking of resources. She noted that presently, "there are turfs and walls built up around KSB, VIPS, and public schools."

KSB_8 said that teachers in public schools should be educated about disabilities and how to handle them in the classroom.

KSB_9 noted that her child's needs were not obvious to the public school teachers. For example, they did not understand why the child would become fatigued, and this situation became overwhelming for the student.

KSB_10 said that public schools should provide sports for special needs children.

KSB_10 said that, in general, the academic curriculum should be stronger and more challenging. She noted that she was referring not only to the curriculum at KSB, but also in the public schools, and contrasted it with Florida's standards, which in her opinion are more advanced. She also noted the importance of offering hands-on activities to accommodate the needs of special needs students.

KSB_10 said that the community needs to be educated about B/VI needs so that they can develop an enhanced awareness and develop means to provide them with improved accessibility to

products and services. For example, she mentioned the availability of Braille cards at local restaurants, Braille labels on store racks, and automatic doors in businesses.

KSB_10 commented about the public schools' investment in sports versus education for special needs students. She said, "More money needs to be invested in education than in ball games... they can learn that at home... they spend more money on sports than they do in special education... Having sports is great, but basic education needs have to be covered first." KSB_11 also remarked that her district has money for sports, but not to provide the necessary services for her child.

KSB_11 said that her child failed one semester because the public school teacher did not send his homework and assignments while he attended a short course at KSB. The district also counted him as absent. She also noted that she had to provide the transportation KSB so that her child could attend the short-course program.

Miscellaneous

Assessment:

Parents questioned whether standardized assessments were appropriate, since the questions are open to misinterpretation. For instance, a parent commented on a question about "air pollution." She explained that her child believed that there actually was garbage in the air. She noted that it is difficult for a student who cannot see to understand a concept like this one because he/she does not have the background knowledge. KSB_14 also asserted that tests should be accessible.

KSB_7 said that in the public schools her child did not feel comfortable enough as to become assertive. She noted that the teachers did not know what assistance and technology was necessary for him. He was being assigned too much homework at the public school. KSB staff contacted her during a short-course and they noted that KSB students do not get that much homework.

KSB_10 short course parent said that she wants to see the public schools continuing to provide access to technology, and to take the necessary steps to include B/VI students in classroom learning experiences.

KSB_14 believes that one of the measurements of success should be "whether or not the grades are sliding." An apparent lack of interest may also be an indicator that a student is struggling.

KSB_14 had difficulty convincing the school to evaluate her child for additional learning difficulties. The family finally paid themselves to have the child tested. The child was finally diagnosed as having a learning disability and Asperger's Syndrome. The school system agreed to test him after the family had spent this money and obtained a final diagnosis. Reportedly, this family experienced years of frustration and misunderstanding regarding their child's emotional state and lack of success at school. According to the parent, her child "missed out on opportunities to learn" because of this situation. She noted that teachers could have used a very different approach. In her opinion, the school did not provide the testing because of the increased amount of paperwork and meetings that would be required. This parent said that the school had already assumed that her child was "lazy." She concluded by recommending that the schools be more willing to test for learning difficulties, and not to simply assume that a student's difficulties are due to a known impairment.

**SUMMARY OF KSD PARENTS
REGIONAL PROGRAMS AND CENTER BASED (DAY AND RESIDENTIAL)**

**TOTAL SAMPLE OF 30; 8 INTERVIEWED
(3 INTERVIEWED FROM SAMPLE; 5 SELF-SELECTED)**

This section contains the interview summaries of eight parents, including the parents of four regional students (3 self-selected; 1 sampled), one residential student (self-selected), and three day-students (1 self-selected; 2 sampled).

With the exception of one person (KSD_6), parents of students attending the regional programs were very pleased with their programs. Overall, they were mostly concerned about their children's speech development, and stated that they would like students to receive more speech therapy, since two hours per week was not sufficient. Comments like these indicate urgency for programs to accommodate all learning and communication needs, and not just manual communication. In addition, the provision of services for less severe needs was also stated as important.

Regional program parents indicated that the KSD center-based program was not an option for their children. Instead, they preferred their children to be mainstreamed into the public school system.

Parents whose children are attending the center-based program at KSD were pleased with the quality of their education, although there were some concerns the attainment of age-appropriate reading levels and English skills.

I. Early Identification and Intervention

KSD_1 parent learned about the First Steps program through another parent attending the KSD Family Learning Vacation. After signing up for First Steps, the child received free speech therapy at a daycare center. Neither the pediatrician nor the audiologist informed this family about the availability of free services. This parent noted that professionals in the health field "should be required to" inform parents about the services and options available in their communities. KSD_1 concluded, "(parents) need all the help they can get, believe me, we know; because a new parent (of) a baby with a hearing loss, is confused, scared, and has many unanswered questions."

KSD_2 is the parent of a two-and-a half- year old child, who was diagnosed with a hearing loss at birth and who has been using hearing aids since 3 months of age. However, he did not start receiving early intervention services until he was 18 months old. Initially, the parents received a note from the hospital indicating that he had failed the hearing test. They called "all over" trying to find services and eventually found out about the First Steps program through the Commission's audiologist. Currently, a First Steps teacher provides services through home visits, and these services will continue until the child is three years old. KSD_2 referred to the services provided by First Steps as "wonderful," and added that they have obtained relevant information about their child's disability and relevant services through them.

KSD_3 reported that frequently parents do not know what is available to them. She noted that she did not know what to do when her child became deaf since she had never dealt with a deaf child.

The hospital referred her to the Commission on Children with Special Health Care Needs where they referred her to the Lexington Speech and Hearing Center.

KSD_4 reported that although her child has a hereditary deafness, he was not diagnosed until he was one year old.

KSD_5 said that her child was diagnosed ten days after birth. In her opinion, “the system makes it hard (for) parents to get services.”

II. Family involvement

KSD_1 reported that a teacher from a regional preschool program held meetings with them at their home, twice a month, before her child started preschool. The teacher helped both parents to learn how to help their child, and that she practiced activities relevant activities with them. Through this program, she has met other parents, deaf adults, and interpreters. She also attended the Family Learning Vacation at KSD, and said that the meetings helped her family.

KSD_2 said that she is a very proactive parent and this is why she has been successful in obtaining information about deafness. For example, she has conducted Internet searches and contacted the John Tracy Clinic in California to research relevant topics. She has been invited to attend parent meetings. However, she is glad she did not attend because most of the children are severely deaf, and in her opinion, “it would have been awkward,” since her child has a mild loss.

KSD_3 said that initially the communication was not good, but it has improved because now she is a proactive parent. For example, she calls ARC meetings and requests monthly progress reports.

Two parents who work at KSD reported being satisfied with the communication with KSD. One of the parents noted that KSD staff “takes the time to explain problems.”

KSD_6 said that she would like to see more support provided to the parents. Including training to help them serve as advocates for their children. Create lending library for parents with newly identified kids. Need advocacy!

KSD_8 noted that although she is happy with the communication, “if parents are not forceful they might not be included as much.” She has a telephone list and communicates with her child’s teacher daily. KSD staff keeps her informed of his educational needs. She maintains good communication with the counselor. She indicated that one of the best aspects of KSD is the support she receives from them. She said they have an open door policy and that the staff keeps her informed about the availability of resources and options.

KSD_8 said “The state needs to do something so that doctors, audiologists, and schools give information to the parents.” In her opinion, “The state has an obligation to inform the public about tax-paid services available to the public.” She suggested a variety of dissemination alternatives, such as 30-second messages on television and radio, flyers and newspapers, and an 800- number. She also wants public school parents to be informed about KSD services and summer sessions.

III. Regionalization

KSD_5 is the parent of a regional student. She said, "I think these regional programs are the way to go."

KSD_6 is the parent of a regional student. She said, "I think these satellite programs are wonderful - Parents need them - Going from one deaf school in the state to a regional focus is great."

KSD_1 is the parent of a regional student. She referred to the program as a "godsend." In general, she expressed positive feelings about this program. However, she noted that it lacked a speech teacher for half a year. Therefore, she had to find a private provider and pay a deductible so that her child could receive speech therapy. She also noted that she hopes to mainstream her child after preschool.

KSD_2 is the parent of a regional student. She does not want to send her child to KSD because it is too far away. She noted that she hopes to enroll her child in a mainstream school. She said that she would only consider KSD as an option if her child's hearing loss was more severe. Another alternative would be to send him to a satellite school, which is 30 miles away.

KSD_5 is the parent of a regional student. Her child is 5 years old and he has been attending a regional preschool program since the age of three. He only attends the program for half a day because its budget does not allow for more coverage. The parent insisted that the children need a full day, noting that, "These kids are behind from day one." She also stressed the importance of a variety of service choices and explained that in her opinion, the educational choices for "children who are very oral" are not good enough. She wants more speech integrated into her regional program. She pointed out that the Ohio Valley Oral School in Cincinnati runs a full-day program and serves toddlers. They also try to mainstream students by the second or third grade. She had considered this school for her child, but decided to push her regional director for more speech services instead. She hopes to mainstream her child and said that the center-based program at KSD is not an option for her child.

KSD_5 said that in her opinion, the early years are "incredibly important." Therefore, during these years, it is important to place an emphasis on language, speech, and audiological services. However, she noted that her district does not have an audiologist. She added that she feels fortunate to have had a supportive district director. The parent also noted: "Reaching out to families where they live and providing services where they live, that is clearly 100 percent better than it was five years ago. There is room for improvement and maintaining directors and keeping them motivated and giving them resources so they can succeed. Some kids are from low income families and don't have the resources we have."

KSD_6 said that she withdrew her child from a regional program because she was not satisfied with the program and had a conflict with the director. She explained that the regional program staff insisted on the provision of assistive ASL, although the child needed a SEE interpreter. Previously, the parent had been reassured that her child would have an interpreter. Additionally, the program only promoted one sign language system. She added that other parents would also like to use this program as a resource, but they do not want to be forced into one communication mode. She said that after they withdrew their child, the director "threw roadblocks." This director is considered expert at ARC meetings and now she does not advocate for their child. She stated that her family actually moved "to get away from the program director's reach," but they did not realize she was a regional consultant. Currently, there is pressure to withdraw the interpreter services because the child is performing at grade level and she speaks well. The parent concluded

by saying, “We have this regional program right here in our backyard and it would be great if we could really use it - I would love to see the satellite program expand and really support parents in their communication modes.”

Regional parents preferred that the preschool and kindergarten program run a full-day, as opposed to a half day, as more time is needed to develop language.

KSD_3 is the parent of a residential student who attended the Lexington Speech and Hearing Center. From the first to the fifth grade, he was enrolled at public elementary school. However, she decided to send her child to KSD when the local school decided to pull out all D/HH children to place them in a resource room in an elementary school. She noted that she would “love for him to be at home,” but that she does not want to deprive him of the education and interaction that he receives at KSD. In her opinion, there should be a choice of public schools, rather than being confined to a single local school.

KSD_4 is the parent of a day student at KSD. She pulled her child out of the public school after three months because the school could not provide the necessary services. She asserted that the teacher at the public school did not want him in the classroom, and that the school staff did not make an effort to accommodate him.

KSD_8 said that initially she did not send her child to KSD because she had heard negative comments about the program. However, the kindergarten teacher at the public school did not serve his needs. The parent said that during class time, the teacher kept him on the “sidelines.” She also sent homework packets so that he would complete his work at home.” She said that, “Teachers did not know what to do with him,” and therefore her child was “neglected.” Reportedly, he spent the entire day in front of the computer, except for 30 daily minutes when he was pulled-out to work with a special education teacher. Due to the lack of support or appropriateness of the services provided to her child, she decided to visit KSD and explore that option. When he started the first grade, the family moved to Danville so that the child could be a day student. This parent knows of other families who left the public school system for similar reasons. In her opinion, “It is unfortunate that public schools cannot deal with deaf children She also stated that public schools take on deaf children only because of the money they get.

IV. KSD and KSB as Statewide Resources

KSD_4 said that teachers at KSD are knowledgeable about the students’ disabilities and that they know how to work with them. She added that regular schools do not have trained teachers. She said that she worries about KSD closing because she knows that the public schools are not equipped to provide services.

KSD_5 is the parent of a regional student. She noted that the KSD’s regional director has been an advocate for her family, and that she does everything possible to obtain the necessary resources for her family.

KSD_6 is the parent of a regional student. She commented that the regional director and her have a different philosophical viewpoint and this has impeded the family’s efforts to increase and maintain services.

KSD_8 noted that although her child has always attended a public high school, KSD is providing the services to help her make the transition to college. Currently, a transitional counselor from

KSD is helping her with this process. She also said that when her child was diagnosed with a hearing loss, KSD obtained the hearing aides and an auditory trainer.

V. Defining Criteria and Context

KSD_4 has a 12-year-old child in the sixth grade. She has always attended KSD with the exception of 3 months when she just started school.

KSD_8 said that her third grade child is a day student, but that he stays at the school one night per week “for cultural interaction and to use his sign language skills.” As he enters junior high, they might consider letting him stay more nights.

VI. Children with Complex Needs

KSD_7 remarked that her children, who are high functioning, are often held back because of other lower functioning children in their class. She added that her children are also expected “to teach” the lower-functioning children.

VII. Service Provider Shortage for B/VI & D/HH Students

KSD_2 expressed concerns about the lack of local universities providing D/HH certification, and said that the nearest institution actually is in Cincinnati. She is a special education teacher and she had considered being certified, but there were no options available in her region.

KSD_5 said that the regional program has a high turnover of D/HH specialists and that the programs lose them to Ohio because of higher salaries. She stated that the state should make an effort to attract better teachers.

KSD_6 stated that it is necessary to provide good in-service training for regular teachers. She noted that being general educators does not automatically qualify them to educate deaf children.

KSD_7 stated that all teachers dealing with hearing impaired children need to receive training on how to better serve the needs of these students.

XII. Investment in Technology and Vocational Training Programs

KSD_5 ranked technology as important.

XIII. Extended Time

KSD_3 stated that students must be able to translate ASL into English, and that English should be bolstered. She added that children should have a choice on how to communicate. She noted that KSD has helped her child become independent. However, she also stated that KSD needs to challenge the students more and that they should implement a stronger English and reading curriculum. She said that her child’s reading abilities were at grade level when he entered school, but that he is currently lagging behind.

In general, parents consider reading, writing, comprehension, and communication skills to be important. The attainment of independent and transitional living skills was also mentioned as

important goals. KSD_7 said she would like to see the independent living apartments at KSD brought back.

KSD_7 stated that KSD was appropriate as a transition stage for the early years or for children who do not have a good foundation. In her opinion, students should eventually transfer to the public schools.

KSD_5 said, "I can't emphasize enough that the School for the Deaf needs to create a goal so that these children can live and be self-sufficient in a hearing world." She added that to achieve this goal, it is also necessary to increase family education, and the access to technology, as well as to speech and auditory services.

(KSD_8) stated that KSD adopts a more comprehensive approach to educate its students. For example, she noted that KSD explicitly teaches social skills, and contrasted this with the public schools' approach in which educators expect the children to learn these skills by observation. She noted this is something difficult to accomplish by deaf children because of their hearing impediments.

A. Other Comments/Notes

KSD_4 said she would like the school to have more homework centers.

KSD 4 stated that it is necessary to educate the community and to create awareness about deafness.

Regional program parents would like to see more speech services.

KSD_6 remarked on the need to respect different viewpoints: "If you have someone in charge who is very closed minded, if you don't share the same view, that person can actually hinder- not just not help- but *hinder* you. Then that's a bad situation."

KSD_8 was concerned about the language used in the assessments, as her child's best language is ASL.

Miscellaneous

KSD_1 noted that insurance companies barely assist with the costs for testing, hearing aids, speech therapy, and other services. She found out that the Commission for Children w/ Special Health Care Needs would assist with the cost of her child's hearing aids.

KSD_8 said that in her opinion, sometimes KSD oversteps its boundaries. For example, she noted that the staff forces her child to wear hearing aids at school, although his hearing loss is profound.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENTS

FIVE INTERVIEWED

FOUR PARENTS OF D/HH CHILDREN AND ONE PARENT OF B/VI CHILDREN

This section includes the summary interviews of one parent of two B/VI children and four parents of D/HH children (all in one county) currently attending public schools. As described in their profiles, some of these children have multiple needs. This sample contains narratives of a wide variety of experiences, placements, and children's needs.

PSD/HH_1 is the parent of a 14-year-old D/HH child, who currently is in the eight grade. This student uses a cochlear implant, and communicates through ASL and speech.

PSD/HH_2 is the parent of a nine-year-old D/HH child, who currently is in the third grade. The student has a mild hearing loss along with a mild vision impairment, and uses hearing aides.

PSD/HH_3 is the parent of an eight-year-old D/HH child, who currently is in the second grade. The student has multiple complications, as well as a mild to moderate hearing loss on his right ear and a severe to profound loss on his left ear. His balance has been affected by ear problems, and as a consequence his physical development is also delayed. Due to all these complications, his cognitive skills are delayed and he does not speak so he can only communicate through ASL and gestures.

PSD/HH_4 is the parent of two D/HH children who are four-years-old, and who currently attend an Early Start Program. One has a mild to moderate hearing loss, and the other has a moderate to severe loss. Both communicate through speech and ASL.

PSB/VI_5 is the parent of two B/VI children. One is fourteen-years-old and currently attends the eighth grade, as well as short courses at KSD. The youngest child is three-years-old and is served by an early intervention program. She has multiple complications, such as hearing loss, sensory problems, and apraxia. To communicate she uses speech, gestures, and ASL.

I. Early Identification and Intervention

PSD/HH_1 said that she did not find out about her child's hearing impairment until she was 15 months old. A friend referred her to an early intervention program, where her child was referred for audiological screening. Before kindergarten, the family participated in SKI-HI, and a therapist visited their home twice a week to teach relevant skills. She noted, "The early intervention component is the most important and probably the least known about - something needs to be done before Kindergarten [because otherwise] five years are wasted [without] that intervention." She added that many parents do not know about the availability of services or options. She suggested that the hospitals or the birth certificate offices should provide parents with a packet containing information about early warning signs, as well as program information.

PSD/HH_2 reported that her child has a mild hearing loss and that it was not diagnosed until she was eight-years-old.

PSD/HH_3 reported that the public school did not have expertise to serve her child's multiple needs. Therefore, the school subcontracted with the "Child Development Center" to provide the

necessary services when the child was three years old. Although the parents were satisfied with the program, it did not specialize in hearing impairment. Hence, the following year the child attended the Lexington Speech and Hearing Center. However, their staff did not want to deal with his other health complications, only with the hearing impairment.

PSD/HH_4 reported that although she was concerned about her children's lack of expressive vocabulary, she did not find out about their hearing impairment until they were two-and-a-half years old. Worried about this language delay, she decided to enroll them in a speech program, where she was referred for a hearing screening. However, her children did not receive early intervention services, since they were almost three years old by the time they were diagnosed with a hearing loss. Currently, they are attending an Early Start program.

PSB/VI_5 said that her youngest child has been receiving early intervention services from First Steps since she was three months old. A therapist provides services through home visits. In addition, First Steps initiated contact with the Deaf Blind Project, which has also been working with the child since she was 18 months old (and will continue to do so until she is twenty-two-years old). The parent said that she is very satisfied with these programs and services. However, she is concerned about her child's transition to the public pre-school because she fears that the services that her child has been receiving for all these years will be discontinued. She explained that she feels that she "has to do a lot of fighting" to obtain a comprehensive set of services. Her child has apraxia and auditory processing problems. In addition, she is expected to be legally blind by ten years of age. Therefore, she wants her to receive comprehensive services while she can still make use of her vision. She explained, "If we don't get the services now, when she is ten, nothing is going to do any good... She is going to be a blind kid that is going to be real hard to teach."

II. Family involvement

PSD/HH_1 was very pleased with the communication with her child's public school. Teachers call her when there are concerns, as well as when her child is doing exceptionally well. She said that the school provides a variety of additional communication opportunities, through bulletins, site-based council, board meetings, newsletters, and brown bag lunches. However, the county did not inform the parents that high school students would be sent back to their home districts. She heard rumors and followed-up with the special education director who confirmed them.

PSD/HH_1 has been frustrated by the poor communication with her home district, and stated that they are not taking her opinions into account. She noted that she has been very active in child's education. However, the home district staff is very unhappy with her input and inquiries. She concluded, "Parents are really willing to help and pitch in for their kids, but there is no one to really turn to and you have to fight and fight - my kid is going to loose and there is no one to help us - you feel disempowered and there is nobody to turn to that cares - they treat parents like we are stupid - they think that their special needs are just going to go away."

PSD/HH_1 stated that counties should provide sign language courses to the parents.

PSD/HH_2 said that she communicates with her child's special education teacher twice a week. She only communicates with other staff during ARC meetings, every six months.

PSD/HH_3 is a teacher's aide at her child's school. Therefore, the communication is very good. She noted that she will follow her child to another school since she is "the only advocate" that her child has because he cannot communicate."

PSD/HH_4 said that she communicates regularly with the D/HH specialist, but that she is not satisfied with the communication with the regular preschool teacher. She stated that she does not feel included, and that without the D/HH specialist she would be very dissatisfied.

PSB/VI_5 said that her older child does not get report cards from the local school while attending the KSB short course programs. She noted that each time she has to request them from the school, and that the only discussion about her child's educational needs takes place during ARC meetings. She indicated that the communication with the public school staff is "very poor," and that they do not maintain regular communication with her. She added that they do not have someone to serve as a liaison between the parents and the school. She also noted that the school did not provide a telephone list to contact specific staff, and that she only receives information through a general newsletter. She stated that she would like to see more parent conferences or parents' nights, since they only hold one at the beginning of the school year.

PSB/VI_5 suggested that the schools improve the communication with families as a means to help the students succeed. She remarked, "We are a big piece of the puzzle. She recommended that the schools increase the communication opportunities by sending more notes home, by providing progress reports, by establishing communication events, and by holding more parent-teacher meetings.

PSD/HH_1 said that she sent her child to the present school because she did not know about other options.

PSD/HH_3 remarked that it is important to educate parents of disabled children about their different options.

PSD/HH_4 suggested that the state should play a larger role in disseminating information regarding hearing screening, options, services, programs, and resources available to them. She reported that she had to find this information "on her own and piece by piece." She suggested one option would be to compile this information on a pamphlet or booklet.

III. Regionalization

PSD/HH_1 is the parent of an eighth grader who started attending the public schools in a neighboring county when she was 15 months of age because her home district did not offer a program for D/HH students. However, that county has decided to send all the high school students back to their respective counties. In the parent's opinion, the home district is not prepared because it does not count with the necessary resources and staff to provide the same level of services that her child has been receiving, and which she considers indispensable to give her an equitable access to education. For example, although the parent has informed the district about the need for an interpreter, they have not advertised the position yet. Furthermore, child's schedule will be based on availability of the D/HH teacher, and not on what the student needs or wants. The parent is considering court action so that her child may have the same rights and opportunities as her peers at the school.

PSD/HH_3 said that her child attends a school in a neighboring county, where the child receives ASL, speech, occupational, and physical therapy. The school has an FM sound system and an itinerant D/HH teacher, who provides one hour of speech therapy every day. However, the parent wants her child to have an interpreter all day long instead just a D/HH teacher one hour per day.

In addition, the county provides high-calorie liquid drinks and diapers for this child. “Care Tenders” sometimes provides babysitters able to deal with his special needs. However, they are understaffed and the service is not always available. KSD was never considered as an option because the parent does not want child to travel long distances, and because he would require significant assistance from the residential program.

PSD/HH_4 said that she does not intend to send her children to KSD since she prefers to have them at home, as long as the local schools can provide for their needs. Currently, a D/HH specialist works one-on-one with them. She engages them in a variety of hands-on experiences, and teaches them oral and ASL communication. Children are in preschool for three hours every day and they are pulled out for speech therapy half hour daily. However, the parent is dissatisfied with the services provided by the regular teacher. In her opinion, the teacher is inexperienced and she seems “distant and unfriendly.” The instructional practices that she applies do not accommodate the needs of her children. The parent will enroll her children in the Lexington Speech and Hearing Center, where all the staff are specialized.

PSB/VI_5 said that she is not aware of any regional programs in her region. The parent reported that she needed to fight for her younger child’s placement and provision of services at the public school. The initial decision was that the child would attend the pre-school program for two days a week even though she needs four days a week. The parent stated, “It was like pulling teeth to get the services like speech, OT, PT, and just getting her in the program – It is really hard for parents with disabled children who have problems because we have to fight for everything our kids get.” The school does not have enough speech therapists and the preschool teacher does not have speech training. It is very important for her child to receive as much educational input and services now, before she becomes legally blind. She needs to make the most of her skills now. The parent noted that since her oldest child’s hearing impairment is not complicated with other disabilities, the services provided by the school are satisfactory.

PSB/VI_5 said that she chose not to send her children to KSB because she wanted them to experience the “real world.”

PSB/VI_5 said that a group of counties should come together, so that they can provide more services to their children with special needs.

IV. KSD and KSB as Statewide Resources

PSB/VI_5 said that her children attend KSB’s short-course programs because the local school system cannot provide the necessary Braille, assistive technology, and O&M services. Her oldest child goes to KSB two to three weeks at a time and returns to school for a month. She attends the short courses for a total of 12 weeks per year. KSB also provides functional vision assessments and conducts routine observations of her youngest child, so that when she is five years old and eligible for services, KSB will be familiarized with her abilities and needs.

V. Defining Criteria and Context

Parents were not specifically asked about this and so did not address this theme.

VI. Children with Complex Needs

PSD/HH_3 reported moving her child from school to school searching for one that could provide comprehensive services. She explained, "Some school programs don't know how to deal with (my child) as a whole." She noted that in general, "educators are only trained and able to serve his hearing disability, but cannot deal with the other complications." For example, this school year he was enrolled for five months in a public school where according to this parent, the staff "did not deal with him as a whole, just with his hearing impairment and sign language." This is why he is now finishing the second grade at a different school in the same county. Even though he would reportedly receive more and better speech and sign language training at the previous school, the mother opted for a program that would serve his multiple needs. However, at his current school, there are no other D/HH students so he cannot use sign language with others, except for his D/HH teacher. His mother said that it "angers" her to see that the school that serves the county's hearing impaired children and that specializes in sign and communication services is not serving "the whole child." She stated that her child "was all but kicked out because they couldn't deal with him - the teacher said that even though she learned about classroom management and classroom behavior in college, she did not know how to deal with him." She concluded, "This has been the most miserable experience because the teachers and even the principal didn't want to deal with (my child)."

PSD/HH_3 also stated there is a need for summer programs for children with multiple disabilities. She has not found a summer program for her child, but she noted that he could benefit from the structure, activities, and socialization opportunities offered by those programs.

VII. Service Provider Shortage for B/VI & D/HH Students

Parents were not specifically asked about this and so did not address this theme.

VIII. Investment in Technology and Vocational Training Programs

PSD/HH_1 said that she would like to see the schools offering more technology oriented programs. In addition, she believes that vocational schools should exist in every county and integrate courses in the regular classroom curriculum so that vocational courses could be offered in each school. In addition, she thinks that sign language should be offered as a foreign language course.

PSD/HH_2 said that she would like to see children have more access to computers.

PSB/VI_5 said that since her children will eventually be blind, she considers it is important for their future to have a good knowledge of technology and computers.

IX. Extended Time

PSD/HH_3 remarked that it is detrimental for her child's progress to spend so many weeks outside of a structured learning environment during the summer. Although he needs the structure and activities provided by a summer program, the parent has not found a program able to take him because he has multiple special needs.

PSB/VI_5 said expressed her concern since her child will become three years old and the early intervention services will be discontinued for three months during the summer vacation. The mother is frustrated to see this discontinuity after years of intensive provision of services. She

noted, “If we serve these kids all year long and help them correct the problem, then maybe by a certain age they’ll be out of special ed and you will save money from there on - instead of having to come in every August to rebuild what they lost in those three months because nobody worked with the kids.”

A. Other Comments/Notes

Parents all commented that with the proper resources and opportunities, children are capable of achieving at the same level of non-disabled peers. Everyone need to have the same expectations for them.

PSD/HH_1 said that schools need to help students become independent.

PSD/HH_1 noted that the collaboration between D/HH teachers and the mainstream teachers has been an important component of her child’s education.

PSH_1 stated that the public schools should be held accountable for the education of special education students.

PSD/HH_2 said that reading and writing need to be emphasized.

PSD/HH_4 said that when teaching D/HH children, it is important to provide hands-on activities, real world applications, and tactile experiences instead of focusing on demonstrations and paper-based work.

PSD/HH_4 stated that regular teachers need to receive professional training to understand the needs of their special education students, as well as the best approaches teach them.

PSD/HH_4 stated that more funding should be available so that children can attend programs such as the Lexington Speech and Hearing Center. She noted that although this is an excellent program, it is expensive.

PSB/VI_5 said that public schools need to provide funds and resources to ensure equitable access and opportunities for hearing impaired children. She said, “it’s scary to send our children to a public school, but there are no other options available since other programs do not receive the funding to serve children with special needs.”

PSB/VI_5 stated that there is a need to educate the community and educators about children with disabilities. There should be programs to expose the community and potential employers to these kids so that they learn about them and understand their potential. Teachers need more training to deal with special populations.

PSB/VI_5 said that the public schools, “will provide a service because it is required by law, but it doesn’t have to be a good service, because as long as they provide it there is nothing you can do.”

PSD/HH_1 said that more interpreters should be available at the public schools.

PSH_1 said that sign language classes should be offered as a foreign language course at the high schools.

PSD/HH_3 stated that she wants her child to have an interpreter all day, rather than an itinerant teacher for just one hour per day.

PSB/VI_5 said that the public schools have limited resources truly to enable children to have equitable access to educational activities. For instance, her child cannot see the ball during PE, and the school “doesn’t want to spend the money” to purchase balls that whistle when moved.

Miscellaneous

PSD/HH_3 said that after several years, she finally found a way of receiving medical assistance through the state. She noted that the medical expenses had been “astronomical,” and that because of their average income, they did not qualify for services not covered by their health insurance.

PSD/HH_4 said that their insurance had to pay for the initial testing of her children. Eventually, they were referred to the Commission for Children on Special Health Care Needs by the Lexington Speech and Hearing, which provided funding for the hearing aides.

PSB/VI_5 chose to send her children to public schools because they offer more opportunities to communicate with other peers. In her opinion, the children are sheltered at KSB and they learn more about the ‘real world’ in the local schools. Her oldest child has learned to be assertive and to confront the outside world. She attends KSB’s short courses, and puts into practice the skills she learns when she returns to her local school.

PSB/VI_5 said that her child attends a summer program funded by the state called “Selective Troopers Island.” She explained that the state troopers host a B/VI group for a week and then an D/HH group another week. The program allows children to socialize. Transportation is provided.

SUMMARY OF CURRENT STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

A TOTAL OF SEVEN KSD STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN TWO FOCUS GROUPS, ONE KSD STUDENT WAS INTERVIEWED ON SITE. A TOTAL OF THREE KSB STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN ONE FOCUS GROUP AND ONE STUDENT WAS INTERVIEWED ON SITE. SIX GRADUATES – ONE FROM KSD AND FIVE FROM KSB – WERE INTERVIEWED.

Summary of Interviews with Current Students

Two focus groups were conducted with KSD students, and one focus group conducted with KSB students. Current students were asked about their experiences at the schools, and in the public schools (if appropriate), what they would like to do in the future, residential experiences (if appropriate), and what they would like to see change at the state school.

Overall, current KSD students have positive feelings about their experiences at KSD. Many students appreciate the cultural aspects of being around peers with similar communication orientation, and the opportunity to be independent. Several students noted that they would like to see more challenging, more diverse classes available at KSD. They mentioned wanting classes such as foreign languages, advanced English, and acting classes. Most of the students in the focus groups attended some classes at the local public school. Students noted mixed experiences in the public schools. One student stated that he would not go back to public schools because he did not like having to use an interpreter constantly. Another student noted that it was difficult to be in class with an interpreter, that it was too hard to watch two people at once. She also mentioned that she was sometimes afraid to ask questions because she had to use an interpreter to do so. One student noted that in public school, “things fly, we are learning all the time...I look forward to public school now because it moves so quickly.” This student felt that at KSD, classes were moving slowly.

A couple of students mentioned that they would like to “improve adult staff’s attitudes” and that he felt staff do not “believe in the kids a lot.” Another student agreed and wanted to see “more motivation on the part of the teachers.” Several students noted that they plan to go into business or other professions where they will need to have better English grammar, and would like the opportunity for more advanced English classes at KSD. One student mentioned that she would like to have some apartments on campus that would allow students to live on their own until graduation. Finally, two students noted that they found current tests to be difficult because of the emphasis on open-ended written items; these students would like to find ways to better show what they know, either through sign or some other adaptation/accommodation.

Students currently attending KSB also have a generally positive attitude about their experiences and quality of services at the school. One student noted that he came from a very small town that could only offer Braille services once a month, so he learned about four letters in eight years. At KSB, he was amazed by all the services and resources that they had available. Another student noted that KSB was great in Braille, and that even in math and science, they were doing a great job with tactile models. A student commented that the O&M services were great at KSB, and he did not think he could get that at the public school. Two students mentioned that they were appreciative of the opportunity to also participate in sports at KSB as well. One student noted that in her hometown, she tried to participate on the swim team, but “they excluded [her] as the ‘little blind girl’ because [she] was different”. One student interviewed noted that at KSB he had

learned that “vision isn’t something that should hold you back, but something that makes you work twice as hard,” and other students agreed with him. One short course student commented that she liked KSB because she does not have to compete for materials, as she does in her local school.

Most students interviewed commented that they attend classes at the local public school, particularly for foreign languages and advances courses. One student noted that she thought teachers at KSB are getting caught up trying to teach to each student’s level, and that those students who are advanced are not challenged enough. A short course student noted that while she appreciates the Braille and mobility classes when she is there, she does not think that she would have the same academic drives and goals if she attended KSB all the time. All of the students interviewed mentioned that they intend to pursue advanced education. All of the students also commented that they appreciate being around peers and developing their social skills with other B/VI children. Many of the students look forward to the opportunity to participate in the Independent Living Skills class, and learn how to cook for themselves. Three of the students stated that they did not like living in the dorms because of the belief that some house parents are too lenient or play favorites with other students.

Summary of Interviews with Graduates

The graduate interviews revolve mostly around personal experiences and former students’ impressions of the two schools. Graduates were asked about general background on the student and how far away they lived from the school, what they felt about the quality their education at KSB or KSD, their experiences as a residential student (if appropriate), and transitions to their adult life.

One graduate from KSD noted that she went to KSD primarily for socialization, education and sports. She is currently pursuing a college education, and is considering several professional options after graduation. When asked about what she thought of the quality of her education at KSD, she commented that in middle school she thought the education was very good, but in high school she did not think it was very good. She noted that she did not have a “real English teacher” when she was there, and that it made it tough for her to keep up her writing and reading skills. She felt they did a great job for her with job training. She got to work as a teacher’s assistant and a counselor’s assistant to see if she liked it, took field trips to colleges, and got help with job interviewing skills. She felt very supported by those at KSD, and noted that if she has problems school staff would help her resolve them.

KSB_1 graduated from KSB in 2001, and attended KSB for about 6-7 years off and on. Her home is four and a half hours away, so was a residential student while at KSB. She went back to her home district because there were classes that KSB did not offer (e.g., chemistry). Right now, she is getting ready to go to community college in business management, and then plans to transfer to another school. She commented that while she felt like KSB taught her well (e.g., Braille), she also feels like they are not doing so well now because they do not offer as many classes that students like to take. She also noted that she felt KSB was “taking a lot of kids with other issues besides visual impairment, and that impacts the learning of other students.” She thought the independent living experience was a good one, and it taught her to shop and cook. She commented that she felt like discipline in the residential program was not strong, and that house parents often play favorites with the students.

KSB_2 also graduated in 2001. He attended KSB for 2 summer programs, and then went there as a senior for the residential living skills program. He lives about 3 hours from the school in

Southern KY. He is not currently employed, but lives on his own, not far from his family. He liked some things about the independent living dorms, but was generally negative about his school experience (due to outside, confounding issues).

KSB_3 graduated in 2000 and attended the school for three years, although he was affiliated through other programs for seven years. He is a local student (in Jefferson Co.) but attended the school as a residential student. He commented that he was not getting the help that he needed in the local schools, which was why he decided to go to KSB. He commented that in public school, his teachers “were constantly pushing [him] in the back of the rooms”. He noted that he would like that the study center to be open after 10 PM, and found it difficult to complete all his studying before it closed. KSB did help him a lot with contacting schools, learning how to apply for college, etc. He stated that he would like to see KSB stop “pushing the good teachers out” and noted that a lot of food people had left because of “problems with the administration of the school.” He is currently employed and plans to go to ECU.

KSB_4 graduated in 2000, and started at KSB in high school for short course classes, and then became a residential student from sophomore year to graduation. She came from a county that was 2 hours away. She is currently finishing her sophomore year in college and studying psychology. She felt that while KSB helped her with computer skills, they did not push her in other courses, so she went to the local school for History, Geography, Chemistry, etc. She noted that she “used Central for academics, KSB for life skills.” In regards to the residential program, she said that while she liked meeting people, she “didn’t care for any of the dorm parents – there’s nothing good I could say about them.” While she felt that KSB provided good living skills, she also felt that academically, KSB did not prepare her for college. She felt like she did not get the attention she deserved because she was a good student and more attention was devoted to lower functioning students.

KSB_5 also graduated in 2000, and attended KSB for 11th and 12th grades as a residential student. His family is from western KY, about 2.5 hours away, and he mentioned that he hated the bus because of poor roads. He is currently working and has just completed professional schooling and will be moving to a new job in that area. He mentioned that he was not aware of KSB until his sophomore year, though he made no indication as to why it was never previously suggested. His home district had no B/VI teacher, so he would have gone to KSB much earlier had he known. He mentioned that he also had some conflicts, issues with the residential staff, and also expressed the belief that some house parents played favorites with students. He said that he would like to see KSB offer more class options, like foreign languages or other electives.

Appendix F:

Regional Map of Kentucky

Service Center Regions

